

Box Office

DIGEST

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54

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*The
Only
Authentic
Box
Office
Figures
Published*



25c

*The Box Office
Reports:*

'High Sierra' Week's Money Pic

See Page 5

The Box Office

DIGEST "HONOR BOX"

The Biggest Grossing Release Of The Past Week

This Week WARNERS wins with

'HIGH SIERRA' 115%



Vice-Pres. in Charge of Production
JACK L. WARNER



Executive Producer
HAL WALLIS



Associate Producer
MARK HELLINGER



Director
RAOUL WALSH



IDA LUPINO



HUMPHREY BOGART

Screenplay
JOHN HUSTON
W. R. BURNETT

From Novel by
W. R. BURNETT

Photographer
TONY GAUDIO



HENRY TRAVERS

Featured
ALAN CURTIS
ARTHUR KENNEDY
JOAN LESLIE
HENRY HULL
JEROME COWAN
MINNA GOMBELL
BARTON McLANE
ELIZABETH RISDON
CORNEL WILDE
DONALD MacBRIDE
PAUL HARVEY
ISABEL JEWELL
WILLIE BEST
SPENCER CHARTERS

DIGEST

The Industry's
Distinctive Weekly

ENTERTAINMENT

An Editorial by ROBERT E. WELSH

The modest Editor last week murmured about the fact that the picture industry needs no legislative chiding—Senatorial or otherwise—to tell it that heavy-handed propaganda, no matter for what side of an argument, is not selling theater tickets.

He just invited the attention of the pundits to the box office figures. And mentioned some of the pictures that were proving the surprises.

This week, judging from advance reports which are unanimous, he can add another one to the case history: "Tall, Dark and Handsome."

He mentions this picture's current surprises because it points the way for another "easy lesson."

That is this simple fact:

It does not take a million or more dollars to make a hit attraction. And producers or directors who start off with the belief that they **MUST** have a million or more to stand up in competition with the tops, are not only often kidding themselves, but in many ways affecting the economic structure of the industry.

And so we come back to the two fundamental facts:

STAR values are of tremendous value, because they give the harried exhibitor, who has little opportunity to allow "word-of-mouth" selling to get him money, the ability to count on some definite factors.

So, star value cannot be ignored.

BUT—

There is also ENTERTAINMENT value. The lack of it can cause pictures with star assets to do nose-dives on runs following the opening ballyhoo in selected spots; its presence can cause pictures without stellar aristocracy to BUILD up and up.

* * *

What is entertainment?

Of course the fellow who could answer that in a few words or a thousand words would be worth the national debt to the picture industry. The companies could combine to pay his salary.

But some guesses can be made.

And at the risk of being definitely accused of proletarian intelligence we put as the first word in the definition: **ESCAPE**.

We don't care what variety of escape you offer—whether

it is release of life's problems through zanie laughs, or complete abandonment of today's calendar by adventure into glorious history, the first requirement of money-making entertainment is to take the customer away from his own daily problems.

Above all, don't aggravate those problems by preaching—and especially sermonizing so effectively about the tragedies of some other characters that he returns to his home feeling worse than before he paid the exhibitor his four bits.

* * *

Is this treason to intelligence?

We don't think so. Let the fact be granted that as a medium of propaganda and education the screen ranks with the press, and with the radio.

But let it also be stated that the salaries which keep the industry going, the dividends which hold and create stockholders, are based upon one thing: Selling tickets.

By all means let's have our propaganda, if you can find enough exhibitors whose cash returns to Hollywood—that means you and you, and me—do not depend on **SELLING** tickets.

* * *

There are highbrow reviews of the arts, literature, and the state of the cosmos, that do not expect to sell their wares at the corner drug store newsstand. There are propagandists endowed with millions who flood the mails with their "messages," and send them to you free.

Let the Hollywoodians who have the same urge to deliver their "messages" to mankind, work out some similar system.

But let's not force it on the exhibitor. He has troubles enough with the alleged entertainment you so frequently deliver him, that neither entertains nor sells the customers, most of whose money is going back to you.

Unless you don't care about money.

And that might be a good thought.

DISTRIBUTORS' BATTING AVERAGE FOR 1940

		%
1. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer	47 Releases	101*
2. United Artists	21 Releases	100
3. Twentieth Century-Fox	48 Releases	93
4. Warners-First National	46 Releases	91
5. Paramount	42 Releases	87
6. Universal	50 Releases	78
7. RKO-Radio	48 Releases	77
8. Columbia	41 Releases	75
9. Republic	25 Releases	70
10. Monogram	26 Releases	66

*Does not include "Gone With the Wind," 388%, sold under special contract, and produced by David Selznick. Now withdrawn from general release.

The Highlighter: **Covers the Picture News Front in a Quick Glance**

Hollywood's highlight of the recent week is pretty obviously the move which has Bill LeBaron stepping out of Paramount's top producer berth, and B. G. DeSylva stepping in. . . And the surprise caused. . . Not so much because LeBaron dropped the reins, that is something that has been hinted at, and possible, for some time. . . But because of Buddy DeSylva taking on the headaches that go with the executive direction of a studio's entire program. . . It is no cinch, mah friends. . . It is one thing to concentrate on one or two pictures a year, and another to accept the grief that comes when spreading a budget allowed by the purse-holders over some fifty pictures. . . If you don't appreciate the heaviness of the task, check with David Selznick on his days as RKO chieftain. . . Or, for more current testimony, you might speak to Darryl Zanuck. . . Or Hal Wallis. . . Theirs are jobs that should be spelled in capitals, with the letters spaced, something like this: J-O-B-S. . . Buddy DeSylva is today's top Broadway producer in point of money hits, with enough coin coming in from mass production of hits to make it unnecessary to borrow headaches. . . DeSylva must now start thinking of release schedules, the voracious appetites of distributing and theater organizations, while trying to keep the weather eye cocked on quality and showmanship. . . It's a hefty two-shouldered burden.

RADIO-RKO ALSO GIVES A STUDIO HIGHLIGHT

While Paramount is making its shift in helmsmen, there comes also the news of a similar move at Radio-RKO, where Ned Depinet, the company's top executive, moves into direct charge of studio operations. . . Harry Edington preparing to step aside. . . Almost seems to parallel the decision by Paramount which brought Frank Freeman from Eastern fields to Hollywood pastures. . . With the likelihood that it will have equally good results, because Freeman and Depinet are much alike in executive char-

acter. . . Both come from the front line trench sector of the industry—the place where you sell 'em. . . Both have a background of more practical efficiency in getting a dollar's worth of return for a dollar spent than has always been the pattern of the Hollywood mind. . . Both have the personalities that command respect while gaining good-will and popularity among associates and subordinates. . . Few there are among this industry's veterans who have travelled the country on sales work as many years as Ned Depinet and retained so much good will, few in studio control who should be expected to have his wide knowledge of the theater man's desires. . . So interesting days seem in store for Radio. . . Harry Edington, it would appear, went in on a promise to deliver the biggest of stars to the company to make its pictures automatics. . . But Harry discovered that selling stars and buying stars are two different things. . . When you sell the star, your job is done; when you buy a star your job has just begun.

SAM GOLDWYN FINALLY SMOKES THE PEACE-PIPE WITH UNITED

Gosh, there really was some news around town in the recent week or so. . . Sam Goldwyn and United Artists got together in a deal that avoided further expensive court actions, and enables both parties to set their plans for future activity without being entangled in too many "if's." . . Sam can go ahead with plans for individual production, and make his release arrangements where he desires, United can bear down on its production schedules without the bothersomeness of figuring that they might still get Sam back on the sales sheets. . . It will be interesting to see where Sam lands, and it is a safe bet that he already has some idea of that landing place; it will be interesting to see how United shapes up the coming year's selling list without its two top producers of recent campaigns, David Selznick and Sam Goldwyn. . . And, speaking of David Selznick, there seems to be

quite a campaign on among the rumor-riters to get David hitched to a full-time production job now that Jock Whitney has picked up his "Gone With The Wind" marbles and gone back to less worrisome pastimes than the backing of trillion dollar epics. . . So far they seem to have picked on almost every company in the business except Republic and Monogram as Selznick's next landing field.

RUNNING IN A CIRCLE JUST TO CATCH STUDIO HIGHLIGHTS

Bill Perlberg, who must be feeling pretty happy these days over "This Thing Called Love" and its husky box office figures, can have another reason to feel cheerful when you consider the possibilities of a Jack Benny picture as his next bait for exhibitors. . . For that matter, Bill should be all-out happy just over the fact that he is now hanging his chapeau on a Zanuck hatrack, with memories of Columbia in the past. . . Perlberg and Jack Benny made a quick hop cross country and back last week to look over New York's sensational stage hit, the revived "Charlie's Aunt." . . Sounds like fun just to say, "Jack Benny in 'Charlie's Aunt'." . . There's a hint of box office news coming up from Columbia, too, in a Fred Astaire picture, with Cole Porter lyrics. . . That's a combination. . . Even better box office news is the starting of Alfred Hitchcock's next Radio picture. . . The title is "Before the Fact," with Cary Grant and Joan Fontaine for the marquee. . . Eddie Small is lining up his forces, with assignments to Directors Ralph Murphy and Tim Whelan. . . Reported that George Schaefer is so enthusiastic over the way that Frank Ross-Norman Krasna-Jean Arthur combination has worked that he is already talking new deal. . . Zanuck is quick to cash in on "Tin Pan Alley's" great reception with announcement of another one to team Alice Faye and John Payne, "The Straight Left," story with a prize fight background.

"FANTASIA"

Walter Disney's latest has finally reached Hollywood. Because of special and expensive new sound equipment it will remain a road show proposition for some time.

"Fantasia" isn't really for review in a motion picture trade publication. True, it is produced on celluloid, but there the contact almost ends. It is a new form of entertainment, an experimental one, that will require many ballots to be taken before a verdict can be given for picture showmen.

The production could be reviewed in the music pages and feel more at home. But they would not be the pages catering to the average run of picture ticket buyers, they would be—to put it bluntly—the highbrow pages.

Apparently there are enough of those elevated foreheads to have

given the picture an extremely successful New York run—still on—and to have started it off well in Hollywood. The question to be faced is, how many of the eyebrow lifters buy theatre tickets in the hinterlands.

Your reviewer must confess that nature may have put him in the low-brow classification. There is so much din, noise, and symphonic roar for over two hours, that he was tired. So tired, when it was over. He admired the cartoon technique, the outstanding Technicolor effects, but the acrobat in the circus doesn't do the same trick over and over again. And this production is acrobatics sugar-coated with appeal to the superior intellects.

"Fantasia" can be put another way: It is like eating an eight course meal with five or six of the courses caviar, a couple or so of them corn. And we do hanker occasionally for roast beef or fluff desserts.

The Box Office: 'High Sierra' Hits High Peak; 'Miss Bishop' Strong

Of 7 New Releases in the Past Week, 2 Ran Over 100%, 2 Came Through Okay, and 2 Were Very Weak.

WARNERS—2 Releases

Warners-First National have two new releases, one an outstanding box office attraction, while the second one is getting by but not as strongly as expected.

Warners' ace producer and director team, Mark Hellinger and Raoul Walsh respectively, who have turned out several of Warners' top money makers, including such hits as the "Roaring Twenties" and "They Drive by Night," have delivered another box office hit in "HIGH SIERRA," which on its first openings is doing quite well at a 115% average, especially considering that the marquee names in the picture are not automatic draws.

Humphrey Bogart with Ida Lupino, who has advanced so rapidly in the past six months, co-star in this thrilling crook melodrama which transfers its locale from the big city to the High Sierra hang out.

Alan Curtis, Arthur Kennedy, Joan Leslie, Barton MacLane and Henry Travers head the featured cast. Exhibitors as a whole should receive good box office results from this one and where action pictures are popular it will be especially strong.

Mark Hellinger was associate producer to Hal Wallis, R. A. Walsh directed.

Warners' second release for this week "HONEYMOON FOR THREE" on its initial openings is not any too strong, only averaging 82%.

Ann Sheridan and George Brent are co-starred. The featured cast includes Charlie Ruggles, Jane Wyman, Johnny Downs and Walter Catlett. Henry Blanke produced under Hal Wallis' supervision and Lloyd Bacon directed.

The picture has been well guided in di-

7 New Releases Not in the Last Issue

		% We Est.
1. High Sierra	WAR	115 110
2. Cheers for Miss Bishop	UA	105 95
3. Road Show	UA	83 85
4. Three on a Honeymoon	WAR	82 90
5. Six Lessons from Madame LaZonga	UNIV	80 80
6. Life With Henry	PAR	75 75
7. Bowery Boy	REP	68 65

rection, and well handled in production. It is an entertaining comedy. The fact that it is not doing better at the box office may be due to a lack of interest in George Brent and Ann Sheridan, or to a lack of oomph in its exploitation to date.

UNITED ARTISTS—2 New Releases

United Artists has two new releases from their independent producers this week, the first of which has opened well, while the second seems rather weak.

Richard A. Rowland's first production for United Artists is "CHEERS FOR MISS BISHOP." This is a "word-of-mouth" picture. It is consistently hitting over that 100% mark, but its possibilities seem to be determined by the territory or the exploitation. It is definitely not for Main St., but it has solid values. No further proof of that is needed than news that Mr. Van Schmus, of the Radio City Music Hall has set in his playing time. Van Schmus has the world's largest theater, the most successful on week by week grosses, and he can't afford to lull himself because he must make profits for the stockholders.

"CHEERS FOR MISS BISHOP" is based on the popular novel by Bess Streeter Aldrich. "Miss Bishop" is in reality a feminine "Mr. Chips" and consequently being a very sentimental story will undoubtedly do its building on word-of-mouth advertising.

Martha Scott, who has received much publicity recently through her outstanding roles in "Our Town" and "Howards of Virginia," very capably portrays the illustrious "Miss Bishop."

There is an excellent cast of featured players headed by Edmund Gwenn, who never fails the audience.

If the exhibitors will give "Miss Bishop" showmanship treatment they will be well rewarded at the box office. Furthermore this is the type of picture that will make friendly patrons at their theatres.

Tay Garnett directed for Producer R. A. Rowland. Old-time exhibitors will remember Dick Rowland as the former head of First National for many years. The United Artists executives are so pleased over his first picture for them that they have signed him to make three more pictures in the coming year.

United Artists' second release this week is a new Hal Roach production "ROAD SHOW" which doesn't seem to be faring any too well, only averaging 82%. Of course, this picture is lacking in marquee names. The cast is headed by Adolph Menjou, Carole Landis and John Hubbard who all in all do not mean much at a box office. Charles Butterworth and Patsy Kelly are featured.

UNIVERSAL—1 Release

Universal's series of musical comedies that Joe Sanford has been producing for the last year and a half continue on their merry way and the latest, "SIX LESSONS FROM MADAME LAZONGA," 80%, seems to be the best box office picture of this series.

Lupe Velez and Leon Errol, who recently registered well in RKO's "Wildcat" series are co-starred in this one. The featured cast includes Helen Parrish, Charles Lang, William Frawley, Eddie Quillan and Big Boy Williams. John Rawlins directed.

PARAMOUNT—Also 1 Release

Paramount's new release this week is an entertaining programmer, the latest in the famous Henry Aldrich series, "LIFE WITH HENRY," 75%. While the Aldrich series doesn't seem to be a very good first run attraction, the pictures are well received in the subsequent runs, neighborhood houses and small town bookings.

Jackie Cooper, as usual heads the cast and seen in support are Leila Ernest, Eddie Bracken, Fred Niblo, Hedda Hopper and Kay Stewart.

Ted Reed produced and directed under William LeBaron's supervision.

REPUBLIC—1 Release

Republic's new release this week is "BOWERY BOY," 68%, which is a fair programmer but entirely lacking in marquee names. It will probably be best suited to fill in with a big percentage picture—or as a good booking for the Saturday kiddies' matinee. The featured cast is headed by Louise Campbell, Jimmy Lydon, Dennis O'Keefe, Helen Vinson, and Roger Pryor.

William Morgan directed and Armand Schaefer acted as associate producer.

22 FEATURES "GOING DOWN"

		Was Now
1. Kitty Foyle	RKO	143 140
2. Love Thy Neighbor	PAR	144 139
3. Comrade X	MGM	141 138
4. Flight Command	MGM	121 113
5. Hudson's Bay	FOX	118 112
6. Chad Hanna	FOX	118 112
7. You'll Find Out	RKO	106 102
8. Son of Monte Cristo	UA	107 100
9. Go West	MGM	100 97
10. Victory	PAR	105 92
11. Four Mothers	WAR	103 92
12. No, No, Nanette	RKO	92 88
13. South of Suez	WAR	84 82
14. Melody Ranch	REP	80 78
15. Texas Rangers	PAR	78 76
16. East of the River	WAR	78 75
17. Night Train	FOX	76 74
18. Remedy for Riches	RKO	75 72
19. Behind the News	REP	72 70
20. World in Flames	PAR	72 70
21. Little Men	RKO	70 67
22. Queen of Destiny	RKO	68 65

7 FEATURES "GOING UP"

		Was Now
1. Philadelphia Story	MGM	176 181
2. Santa Fe Trail	WAR	146 148
3. This Thing Called Love	COL	126 132
4. Thief of Bagdad	UA	122 124
5. Maisie Was a Lady	MGM	81 87
6. Trail of the Vigilantes	UNIV	81 83
7. She Couldn't Say No	WAR	65 67

'Western Union' Smash Hit for the Masses

TWENTIETH CENTURY-FOX

The Digest's Box Office Estimate
125%

Vice-Pres. in charge of prod. Darryl F. Zanuck
Associate producer Harry Joe Brown
Director Fritz Lang
Screenplay Robert Carson
Stars Robert Young, Randolph Scott,
Dean Jagger, Virginia Gilmore
Featured: John Carradine, Slim Summerville,
Chill Wills, Barton MacLane, Russell Hicks,
Victor Kilian, Minor Watson, George Chandler,
Chief Big Tree, Chief Thundercloud,
Dick Rich, Harry Strang, Charles Middleton,
Addison Richards, Irving Bacon.
Photographers Edward Cronjager,
Allen M. Davey

Time 93 minutes

They can haul out the Zanuck drums again, and sound all the loud noises the cymbals can give. "Western Union" hits all the notes in the entertainment scale. It will be a box-office natural, and a luscious gift to Twentieth stockholders.

The elements that make such enthusiasm possible are many. First, it is the great, beautiful, actionful outdoors, with the never-failing theme of men against odds. Second, all this has been done against a Technicolor background combining restfulness with sheer enchantment in such fashion as to provoke a flood of adjectives. And, third, fourth, and fifth, Fritz Lang is a director of ace quality, the cast is great, the scripting intelligent, and there is a musical background that is an aid, not a detriment.

In common with many people, your reviewer has been wondering where the romance could be found in a story of "Western Union." Well, the romance is the same that we have always had, of men who brave the wilds and the Indians, only this time their task is not merely driving covered wagons, but also that of stringing talking wires.

This becomes a new story when we see it through the eyes of Dean Jagger, as Edward Creighton, who pioneered the hard-won progress of the singing wires, and those who aided him or sought to harass him.

Randolph Scott is his principal aide, but Scott lives under a cloud of previous outlawry. Robert Young is the tenderfoot, Harvard-labelled, who comes through when the chips are down and the bullets are flying. Virginia Gilmore is Jagger's sister, a tele-

Current Reviews

		We Est.
1. Western Union	FOX	125
2. Back Street	UNIV	125
3. You're the One	PAR	90
4. Road Show	UA	85
5. Buck Private	UNIV	85
6. The Mad Doctor	PAR	80
7. The Monster and the Girl	PAR	70
8. Meet the Chump	UNIV	70
9. Nobody's Children	COL	65
10. Secret Evidence	PDC	65
11. Robin Hood of the Pecos	REP	65
12. Petticoat Politics	REP	65
13. Fantasia	DISNEY	??

graph operator, and the object of affections between Scott and Young.

Scott's is the fat part of the picture, and the statement can be definitely made that his performance will advance his star value tremendously. It is a restrained performance that might have been swashbuckling, and Scott in this sort of Technicolor takes on added appeal.

All the cast is a delight. Dean Jagger's career will be helped along, particularly since he plays straight without the need of Brigham Young characteristics. Jagger cannot only act, but his voice has a peculiarly ingratiating charm on the sound track. Robert Young, with one of those tough roles with which he should be familiar by now—the boy who gets only half the sympathy—turns in his customary fine job. And this Virginia Gilmore youngster has now clinched the fact that she is many miles ahead of being just an accident. We have seen her in parts with better opportunities than could naturally be expected for the heroine in a he-man yarn such as this, but she hasn't failed us yet.

Support has been well-selected, from some of our best. There is John Carradine, for a moment or two; we have Slim Summerville for comedy; Barton MacLane in a corking heavy characterization; and even the Indians are real and good, Chief Thundercloud—remember "Geronimo"—getting a fine scene. There's Chief Big Tree, so real as to be a relief from most screen Indians.

Fritz Lang's direction is in his "Fury"

style, that is, it takes situations that might be the most normal of Western action for an ordinary horse opy and by his sense of pictorial backgrounding, his timing, spotting close-ups, etc., gives them magnified strength. Zanuck, and Harry Joe Brown, who was associate producer, must have given him maximum cooperation on this, for there are scenes of beauty and power on location sites that could only have been secured by front office assurance that the best was none too good. Robert Carson's screenplay and dialogue tells its story straightforwardly, and allows its characters to talk intelligently. Timing is such that even when Scott says the trite "Hands up!"—or something akin to that—it doesn't seem hokey.

Darryl Zanuck and his associate Harry Joe Brown can feel very happy. "Western Union" will sell car-loads of tickets.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: Let them know that "Western Union" doesn't mean a commercial story—the first comers will start the ball rolling into a ticket avalanche. Previewed January 30th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "If audiences like good, solid, tense entertainment, crowded with logical action and painted on a Western screen, this show fills the bill and overflows the cup."

VARIETY: "A burly action picture, and very dudish in its Technicolor trappings, is 'Western Union.' It has about everything in the line of general entertainment to make it one of 20th Fox's best bets of the season for both men and women."

◆ THE DIGEST IS THE FACT PAPER ◆
OF THE INDUSTRY

'Back Street' May Be Heavy For 1941 Diet

UNIVERSAL

The Digest's Box Office Estimate
125%

Producer _____ Bruce Manning
Director _____ Robert Stevenson
Screenplay _____ Bruce Manning, Felix Jackson
Based on novel by _____ Fannie Hurst
Stars _____ Charles Boyer, Margaret Sullavan

Featured: Richard Carlson, Frank McHugh, Tim Holt, Frank Jenks, Esther Dale, Samuel S. Hinds, Peggy Stuart, Nell O'Day, Kitty O'Neil, Nella Walker, Cecil Cunningham.
Photographer _____ William Daniels
Art Director _____ Jack Otterson
Time _____ 89 minutes

The woman appeal inherent in any "other woman" yarn, particularly one with the background of "Back Street," given excellent production such as Bruce Manning has accorded this new Universal version, will undoubtedly result in figures on the black side of the ledger for exhibitors playing the picture. For, there is also the Boyer-Sullavan value.

But the picture is a problem for 1941 audience diets. It is slow-paced in motion, a bit bewildering in characterization, and a trifle on the hammy side every now and then in direction.

However, the women who turn out for the box office line to see how the wrong sort of women live and die, and who may like to point out to hubbies the things that befall the man who strays from the path, will probably again chuck their coin in.

This new version, while retaining the underlying theme, is not quite the "Back Street" story that John Stahl produced and directed for Universal. So, aside from the values in the title and theme, it must be considered pretty much as a new picture.

This time it is Charles Boyer in the original John Boles characterization, with Mar-

garet Sullavan handling Irene Dunne's marquee chores.

The city slicker comes to the small town. This particular slicker happens to be Charles Boyer, who extends his overnight visit for a week or more when his eyes meet those of Margaret Sullavan. Miss Sullavan is a cocky miss of the town, a step-daughter, who really seems to be getting along well with romance by association with Richard Carlson, youngster with ideas about horseless carriages.

Miss Sullavan falls for Boyer, and he reciprocates, but the trouble is that the latter has a fiancée back somewhere in the East. Even at that, he forgets the fiancée for a few minutes, actually plans to marry Margaret, but, darn it, the gal misses the boat. So the paddle wheels churn down the river while our heroine stands on the dock.

Years later they meet again, on a New York street corner, in a snowstorm. The eventuality — Miss Sullavan becomes the other woman, with a luxurious apartment, and spoodles of furs. Because poor Charlie had meanwhile become married, and was also a father, Boyer vouchsafes the question of getting a divorce from his lawfully wedded spouse once, but nothing comes of it. And even after he lets her down badly on one occasion and Miss Sullavan returns to the home town, with definite plans to marry the likeable auto genius, nothing happens. Because Boyer shows up.

All of this puts quite a burden on Charles Boyer for the audience appeal of the picture, because it must depend on how the women palpitate over Mr. Boyer, on how many excuses the men will make for him and for Miss Sullavan. Both of the stars turn in grand performances, with Frank McHugh close on their heels in a part that starts as brisk comedy, but ends by giving this fine actor meaty moments of seriousness. Richard

Carlson's fine job will advance his career; he is the fellow you hope will win the girl.

Bruce Manning, in his initial production assignment at Universal, has also served as collaborator on the screenplay. Despite his dated subject, he has a money picture that will start his producer record at Universal off with a bang, and when he gets his teeth into such subjects as he wrote so often for Deanna Durbin, you can expect even more noise.

Director Robert Stevenson, who came here from England for an assignment with David Selznick, which turned out to be a loan-out to RKO for "Tom Brown's School Days," handles his scenes very much on the "stagey" side—that is, each scene is a lifting and lowering of the curtain, without full consideration for motion picture pace. The result is a sense of heaviness, not entirely necessary.

Aside from Frank McHugh's top performance, mention should be made of good supporting jobs turned in by Frank Jenks and Tim Holt.

Jack Otterson's art direction had to cover quite a span of years as the story unfolds, and the results he achieved are aces.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: Pretty safe woman's picture. If you double bill, get a haywire comedy with it. If not, just sell those women who still remember the book, and are waiting to buy tickets again. Previewed February 4th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "The master craftsmanship which is evidenced in every foot of 'Back Street' makes of it an absorbing, beautifully done film, with deep human appeal."

VARIETY: "'Back Street,' Fannie Hurst's most widely read novel, comes to the screen in its second edition for full potential entertainment value and the assurance of box office riches."

'You're the One' Good Audience Bet

PARAMOUNT

The Digest's Box Office Estimate
90%

Written and Produced by _____ Gene Markey
Director _____ Ralph Murphy
Featured: Orrin Tucker, Bonnie Baker, Albert Dekker, Jerry Colonna, Edward Everett Horton, Lillian Cornell, Walter Catlett, Don Castle, Teddy Hart, Renie Riano, Eddie Conrad, Tom Dugan, Clarence Wilson, Mariska Aldrich, Charles Lane.
Photographer _____ Ted Tetzlaff
Time _____ 81 Minutes

There isn't much sense to the proceedings in "You're the One," but there are plenty of laughs. There isn't much heft to the story outline, but apparently Producer-Writer Gene Markey and Director Ralph Murphy just decided they had a 1941 vaudeville show on their hands, and were satisfied to make it a fast-stepping bill, even if somewhat disconnected.

And in search of anything and everything to tickle the risibilities, they didn't even

hesitate to drag in many of the moth-eaten gags. But, as Jerry Colonna puts it in one dialogue line topping a situation, "It's old, but it's reliable."

The picture has its box office values in the radio following that goes hot for Orrin Tucker's music, for Bonnie Baker's individualistic style, and for Jerry Colonna at last getting some real footage. It takes on its added strength in the fact that the balance of the cast has been hand-picked for veteran troupers who know the job of getting laughs.

Its weakness is that the collection of this sort of talent practically forced Writer Markey, in getting the utmost out of the musickers and the comics, to confine himself to the slenderest of story outlines, just sufficient to change scenes. But Ralph Murphy manages to hold it together, to give it pace, and who is worrying much about sense these days?

We won't attempt to tell the story, or to give due praise to all the cast credits deserv-

ing that praise. Telling the story wouldn't mean much, and listing the orchids would be like using one paragraph to give the highlights of about six weeks of the old Palace Theatre of regretted memory.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: A crazy collection of laugh hokum, whose box office values you can best judge yourself by your knowledge. Not for critics, but if you have one of those "mass" audiences they'll have a heck of a good time. Previewed Jan. 29th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "Looking at Gene Markey's 'You're the One' is like looking into a Christmas stocking. It's full of delightful surprises and you never know what's coming next."

VARIETY: "Followers of Bonnie Baker and Orrin Tucker's rhythms on the radio and records will like their favorites' venture into a different medium Bolstered by a streling melange of mad comedians, couple have been given a showmanly film debut under the guidance of Gene Markey. The Baker-Tucker fans should form a ready-made theatre audience to which the followers of Jerry Colonna will be added."

'Road Show' Gets Lot of Slapstick Laughs

HAL ROACH-UA

The Digest's Box Office Estimate
85%

Producer-Director Hal Roach
Screenplay Arnold Belgrade, Harry Langdon,
Mickell Novak
Based on Novel by Eric Hatch
Featured: Adolphe Menjou, Carole Landis, John
Hubbard, Charles Butterworth, George E.
Stone, Patsy Kelly, Willie Best, Margaret
Roach, Polly Ann Young, Edward Norris,
Marjorie Woodworth, Florence Bates, the
Charioteers.
Photographer Norbert Brodine
Time 85 Minutes

There is a lot of good fun in "Road Show," and it probably will mean little or nothing one way or another to cash audience desires to report that it is loosely constructed, and the laughs rather more spasmodic than continuous. The important point is that the laughs are there.

Hal Roach directed this one himself, with production assistance from Gordon Douglas and Hal Roach, Jr. Producer Roach draws from his years of success in delivering laughs to provide individual sequences that are sure fire; Director Roach develops the sequences to many moments of top fun. But somewhere between Producer Roach and Director Roach there wasn't that coordina-

tion that the critics would like in a 1941 picture.

However, despite the fact that everything is pretty much according to the patterned book in comedy construction, since everything is in fun, few of the cash customers are apt to complain about the fact that the picture's construction is really that of a series of shorts.

The story is on the screwball side. It provides a romp for Adolphe Menjou, in a meaty role that he takes into both his hands. Also Roach has added a cast that knows its wild and wooly near-slapstick fun. Just listen to the better known names: Patsy Kelly, Charles Butterworth, George E. Stone, Willie Best, and then add on that they are all experienced in the good old broad "make-em-laugh" technique.

For straight purposes there is the personable team of Carole Landis and John Hubbard, who satisfy, without having any opportunity to do more than that.

The story premise of "Road Show" is as screwballly as the things that follow in its celluloid telling. Hubbard, on the way to the altar for the hitching rite, and realizing that the gal is just a gold-digger after his money, puts on an insanity act to escape the bridle. But the trouble is that this act also

lands him in a home for mental patients.

There he meets Menjou. Menjou's part is three quarters Menjou, one quarter the hammy, tongue-in-cheek, John Barrymore, but all the way a delight. And, if you possess the experienced imagination of a veteran exhibitor, you know what things can happen when John Hubbard gets into a nut house with a companion such as Menjou.

Maybe it could have been a better picture, with the possibilities, but it will sell a lot of enjoyment as it is.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: A bit too long for its values, and not a critic's picture. But the package encloses a lot of laughs. Previewed Feb. 5th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "From a technical standpoint almost everything is the matter with 'Road Show,' yet for approximately two-thirds of its length, there is no denying that it contains a lot of slap-happy if unsmooth, entertainment, with a copious quantity of laughs."

VARIETY: "Here is such a slather of slapstick farce as the screen has dished out but seldom since the old neo-Sennett days and the heyday of Hal Roach's brand of filmsillicals. It is screwball from the first turn of the camera, and keeps up the pace most of the way to spell joyous and welcome entertainment for the mob."

'Buck Private' Timely Universal Comedy

UNIVERSAL

The Digest's Box Office Estimate
85%

Associate Producer Alex Gottlieb
Director Arthur Lubin
Original Screenplay Arthur T. Horman
Featured: Lee Bowman, Alan Curtis, Bud Abbott,
Lou Costello, Andrew Sisters, Jane Frazee,
Nat Pendelton, Samuel S. Hinds, Harry
Strang, Nella Walker, Leonard Elliott, Shemp
Howard, Mike Frankovitch, Dora Clemant.
Photographer Milton Krasner
Art Director Jack Otterson
Time 84 Minutes

Universal beat the gun on this picture about the problems of your boys and mine who are going into this and that connected with defense, and they did it in a clever manner. The picture, making no attempt to be an epic, but just sitting down in mess-hall with the boys in the army, can be sold for plenty of money.

It also establishes the fact that the screen should not lose Abbott and Costello. Veterans of the show business will tell you that they have many routines that are standard favorites—but who is going to answer an audience that still gets close to the hysteric point over their handling of those routines.

Universal beat the starting gate on the conscriptee subject, so let's see what they did with their subject. First of all, they decided that the customers did not want to take this conscription problem too seriously. That was a good idea. So they followed it

up by allowing the story and the players to go the limit in search of hilarity. There are moments when it does not make sense, but who cares about sense if you are too busy laughing.

The stars sockeroo value in selling a scene, the theme, are both a break for Director Arthur Lubin, who has been knocking at that door to the "A" department basing his case on so many limited "B" pictures that did pretty well, and the job he has turned in will keep the door open.

We have talked about Abbott and Costello and told you our definite opinion that they are picture bets who should be held for the screen. But the picture also gives vocal moments from the radio-wise Andrews Sisters, who are in spots for top warbling.

The story? Oh, well, you know the one about the boy who is drafted. Didn't you see it in nineteen something-or-other? The only differences are the people who do the telling.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: Not a super-A, but we think it is hot for mass audiences. Previewed Jan. 28th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "With 'Buck Privates,' Universal fires a roaring salvo of sock entertainment that is going to have them laughing from coast to coast. At the same time it is tinged with just enough of the patriotic flavor to stir the pulses. On both counts it is a real winner. Its comedy is riotous. Its zest and pace are terrific, and it has captured completely the spirit of the army camps and defense-minded America."

VARIETY: "Universal has a winner in 'Buck Privates,' first of the crop of pictures dealing lightly or seriously with Uncle Sam's rookie draftees. It has vim and vigor, swing and sing and boogie-woogie beat."

ALL MAJOR FEATURES RELEASED IN 1941

Kitty Foyle	RKO	140
This Thing Called Love	COL	132
High Sierra	WAR	115
Flight Command	MGM	113
Hudson's Bay	FOX	112
Cheers for Miss Bishop	UA	105
Son of Monte Cristo	UA	100
Victory	PAR	92
Road Show	UA	83
Three on a Honeymoon	WAR	82
Maisie Was a Lady	MGM	82
Ellery Queen, Master Detective	COL	82
Six Lessons from Madame LaZonga	UNIV	80
Texas Rangers Ride Again	PAR	78
Life With Henry	PAR	75
Invisible Woman	UNIV	74
Convoy	RKO	73
Where Did You Get That Girl	UNIV	72
Lucky Devils	UNIV	72
Phantom Submarine	COL	72
She Couldn't Say No	WAR	70
Michael Shayne, Private Detective	FOX	70
Barnyard Follies	REP	69
Bowery Boy	REP	68
Her First Romance	MONO	66
Pride of the Bowery	MONO	63
The Old Swimming Hole	MONO	60

'The Mad Doctor' Goes Pretty Mad

PARAMOUNT

The Digest's Box Office Estimate
80%

Producer George Arthur
Director Tim Whelan
Screenplay Howard J. Green
Stars Basil Rathbone, Ellen Drew, John Howard
Featured: Barbara Allen, Ralph Morgan, Martin Kosleck, Kitty Kelly, Hugh O'Connell.
Photographer Ted Tetzlaff
Time 90 Minutes

They handed Tim Whelan, who has such excellent credits on his list as the Charles Laughton, "Sidewalks of London," a tough assignment on this one. He has made the utmost of the good things in his material, while not quite able to overcome the weaknesses.

Chief weakness is a lengthy and wandering story, which is not at all helped by the fact that its central character gives Basil Rathbone an eagerly seized opportunity to

chew up the scenery. There are high moments, especially an effective opening reel or so, but in endeavoring to go all-out for horror and bang away at its macabre points, the ninety minutes of its running become trying on patience.

Don't book it if your audiences are not prepared to suffer. For the Rathbone role is that of a mad psychiatrist, who blends frequent murder with his moonings professionally. Rathbone's trick is to marry women with money, then dispose of them by means that bring no suspicion his way. Psychiatry is the means by which he entices his victims.

It's an easy life, if you like murder as Rathbone does. But he brings on his doom when he selects Ellen Drew for the next victim, and that choice brings in John Howard, reporter, who unravels the killer's past.

Ellen Drew struggles with a part that gives her none the best of it, while John Howard can do no more than contribute his likeable

personality to the reporter's role. In the support, top performance comes from Martin Kosleck, who will be remembered for the talked-of Doctor Goebbels characterization in "Confessions of a Nazi Spy." Kosleck is a real actor, and should be seen more often.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: A sort of horror hash. Previewed Feb. 4th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "'The Mad Doctor' is sock horror melodrama, made one of the top efforts of its type by the beautifully imaginative direction of Tim Whelan and the stunning performance of Basil Rathbone."

VARIETY: "Horror fans are going to find 'The Mad Doctor' to their liking. How other ticket buyers will greet the opus is problematical. It should play out satisfactorily in general situations. Its long running time, 90 minutes, will draw objections although in a large part necessary to give the proper growing tension to the story without leaving loopholes."

'Secret Evidence' Good Low Budget Job

PRODUCERS

The Digest's Box Office Estimate
65%

Producer E. B. Derr
Associate Producer Paul Page
Director William Nigh
Screenplay Brenda Kline
Original Story Edward Bennett

Featured: Marjorie Reynolds, Charles Quigley, Ward McTaggart, Kenneth Harlan, Donald Curtis, Howard Masters, Bob White, Kitty McHugh, Bud Buster, Charles Phipps, Dorothy Vaughan, Boyd Irwin.

Photographer Arthur Martinelli
Time 63 Minutes

The story is one of those "shadow of the past" things, this time Marjorie Reynolds being the victim. Just after she has become engaged to a newly appointed assistant district attorney, back from the past comes a released convict, former fiance, and with a hold over her because of knowledge of her brother's complicity in the crimes that sent him to prison.

It is an interesting basis for a story, and the development of it has been handled to extract full values in suspense.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: A good bet in its price range. Previewed Feb. 2nd.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "Well-drawn and nicely balanced characterizations, unusual in this type of melodrama. combined with skillfully handled production and competent direction, give to 'Secret Evidence' a quality which lifts it well above its anticipated bracket."

VARIETY: "Exhibitors will have a time making 'Secret Evidence' pay out. Whatever worth is given feature by some hard tramping of a few cast members is smothered under such corny writing and direction that the results brought alternate applause and laughs, but in the wrong spots, from the preview audience."

In "Secret Evidence," E. B. Derr has delivered a picture in the low-budget group that gives evidence of the same instinctive touch in casting and story handling that he used to show in the top money field. It will be remembered that it was the Derr regime at Pathe that gave us Ann Harding in "Holiday," among other hits, and if memory serves, it was also Derr who brought Clark Gable to the screen in a picture called "Painted Desert."

"Secret Evidence" is an unpretentious melodrama, chiefly enjoyable because of its cast, and a closely knit story that maintains intelligent suspense.

Marjorie Reynolds carries the burden of the action, and turns in a performance clearly indicating that she is worthy of more frequent opportunities. There is a newcomer, Ward McTaggart, playing a soft-spoken racketeer, who will bear watching. Charles Quigley capably rounds out the top spots.

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It is gratifying to note the business being established by "High Sierra" throughout the nation. My sincere thanks to all those with whom I was associated in its production.

—Mark Hellinger.

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RAOUL WALSH

Directed

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"STRAWBERRY BLONDE"

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THE BATTING AVERAGES

Editor's Note: This page, which will be a weekly feature, is a supplement to the service delivered by our statistical publications, BOX OFFICE ANNUAL, and THE MID-YEAR SUMMARIES. . . . It naturally does not give the complete coverage of the field that those publications do, since there are many producers, directors, players, etc., whose best pictures may be coming up later in the year. . . .

Producers and Associate Producers

	Pictures	%
Sam Zimbalist	1	232
William H. Pine	1	202
Joseph Mankiewicz	2	156
Lou Edelman	1	153
Leo McCarey	1	143
Gottfried Reinhardt	1	138
Laurence Weingarten	2	136
Hunt Stromberg	3	127
Arthur Freed	2	127
Bob Fellows	4	124
Arthur Hornblow	2	123
Nunnally Johnson	3	120
William Cagney	1	119
John Considine	3	115
David Lewis	1	114
Sidney Franklin	2	113
B. P. Schulberg	1	113
George Haight	1	112
Lester Cowan	1	112
Harlan Thompson	2	110
Kenneth Macgowan	5	110
Robert Lord	3	109
Harry Joe Brown	4	108
Joseph Pasternak	4	108
Jack Skirball	1	107
Mark Hellinger	4	107
Jules Levey	1	106
Henry Blanke	4	105
Victor Saville	2	103
Bill Perlberg	1	102
Milton Bren	1	101

Producer-Directors

	Pictures	%
Cecil B. DeMille	1	202
Charles Chaplin	1	184
Robert Leonard	1	135
Mark Sandrich	2	133
Howard Hawks	1	126
William Seiter	1	113
Wesley Ruggles	2	112
Gregory La Cava	1	112
Frank Lloyd	1	107
David Butler	2	101
John Ford	1	101

Actresses

	Pictures	%
Claudette Colbert	2	177
Irene Dunne	1	143
Bette Davis	2	134
Judy Garland	3	133
Madeleine Carroll	3	132
Norma Shearer	1	130
Myrna Loy	2	130
Alice Faye	3	129
Deanna Durbin	2	126
Jeanette MacDonald	2	126
Olivia de Havilland	2	122
Hedy Lamarr	2	120
Joan Crawford	2	118
Paulette Goddard	2	115
Eleanor Powell	1	115
Rosalind Russell	2	114
Dorothy Lamour	5	113
Jean Arthur	2	112
Ginger Rogers	2	112
Mae West	1	112
Carole Lombard	2	107
Loretta Young	2	107

Directors

	Pictures	%
Jack Conway	1	232
John Ford	1	178
King Vidor	2	146
Alfred Hitchcock	2	146
Michael Curtiz	3	144
George Cukor	2	141
Rouben Mamoulian	1	138
William Seiter	1	137
Irving Cummings	2	132
Victor Schertzinger	2	131
Mervyn LeRoy	1	130
Ludwig Berger	1	124
William Wyler	2	123
Frank Borzage	2	121
Mitchell Leisen	1	121
W. S. Van Dyke	3	120
Bob Leonard	2	120
Sidney Lanfield	1	119
William Keighley	4	118
Garson Kanin	2	117
Henry Koster	1	115
Walter Lang	2	114
Clarence Brown	1	113
Busby Berkeley	2	112
Lewis Milestone	1	112
Henry Hathaway	2	111
Henry King	3	109
George Marshall	2	109
Michael Powell	2	109
Anatole Litvak	4	108
Alexander Hall	2	108
Fritz Lang	1	107
Norman Taurog	3	107
H. C. Potter	1	105
Edward Ludwig	1	103
Raoul Walsh	2	102
Tim Whelan	2	102
George Seitz	3	100

Actors

	Pictures	%
Charles Chaplin	1	184
Clark Gable	3	166
Spencer Tracy	4	165
Gary Cooper	2	160
Errol Flynn	3	147
William Powell	1	141
Charles Boyer	1	140
Mickey Rooney	3	139
Cary Grant	4	139
Jack Benny	2	133
Bob Hope	2	132
James Cagney	3	129
Nelson Eddy	2	127
James Stewart	4	126
Laurence Olivier	2	124
Robert Taylor	2	123
Bing Crosby	3	120
Tyrone Power	3	120
Don Ameche	4	118
Henry Fonda	2	110
Fred Astaire	2	110
George Raft	2	108
Allan Jones	1	106
Joel McCrea	3	106
Fredric March	1	105
Pat O'Brien	8	103
Kay Kyser	1	102
Edward G. Robinson	3	101

Thanks to the showmen throughout the country
who have joined the newspaper and trade critics
in their enthusiastic approval of

"Cheers for Miss Bishop"

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Richard D. Rowland". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

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Booked Into Music Hall, New York City, for March

My appreciation to the press and every=
one connected with the production

"CHEERS FOR MISS BISHOP"

Jay Garnett

Management
NOLL GURNEY

Now in Fourth Week, Four Star Theatre, Los Angeles

'Cheers for Miss Bishop'

A RICHARD ROWLAND PRODUCTION

RELEASED THRU UNITED ARTISTS



Martha Scott

plays
ELLA BISHOP

Management
NOLL GURNEY

'Cheers for Miss Bishop'

A RICHARD ROWLAND PRODUCTION

RELEASED THRU UNITED ARTISTS

All Major Features Released in 1940

A

OVER \$500,000.

Gone With the Wind	MGM	388
Boom Town	MGM	232
North West Mounted Police	PAR	202
The Dictator	UA	184
Philadelphia Story	MGM	181
Grapes of Wrath	FOX	178
Rebecca	UA	170
Strike Up the Band	MGM	161
Northwest Passage	MGM	154
The Fighting 69th	WAR	153
Sea Hawk	WAR	151
Tin Pan Allev	FOX	150

Santa Fe Trail	WAR	148
My Favorite Wife	RKO	143
Virginia City	WAR	142
Road To Singapore	PAR	141
I Love You Again	MGM	141
All This and Heaven Too	WAR	140
Conrad X	MGM	139
Love Thy Neighbor	PAR	139
Mark of Zorro	FOX	138
It's A Date	UNIV	137
Knight Rockne	WAR	136
New Moon	MGM	135
Lillian Russell	FOX	133
Strange Cargo	MGM	131
Escape	MGM	130
Pinocchio	RKO	130
Down Argentine Way	FOX	130

The Letter	WAR	128
Buck Benny Rides Again	PAR	127
His Girl Friday	COL	126
The Ghost Breakers	PAR	124
Thief of Bagdad	UA	124
They Drive by Night	WAR	123
Johnny Apollo	FOX	122
Arise My Love	PAR	121
Rhythm on the River	PAR	121
Pride and Prejudice	MGM	121
Foreign Correspondent	UA	121

Swanee River	FOX	119
City of Conquest	WAR	119
Third Finger Left Hand	MGM	118
Bitter Sweet	MGM	117
The Westerner	UA	117
Arizona	COL	116
Arriad Zone	WAR	116
Waterloo Bridge	MGM	116
Spring Parade	UNIV	115
No Time for Comedy	WAR	115
Broadway Melody of 1940	MGM	115
Young Tom Edison	MGM	113
Edison The Man	MGM	113
Chad Hanna	FOX	112
Lucky Partners	RKO	112
Primrose Path	RKO	112
My Little Chickadee	UNIV	112
Maryland	FOX	111
Mortal Storm	MGM	111

My Son, My Son	UA	109
Irene	RKO	108
Ten Many Husbands	COL	108
Howards of Virginia	COL	107
Return of Frank James	FOX	107
South of Pago Pago	UA	106
Boys from Syracuse	UNIV	106
Second Chorus	PAR	105
Susan and God	MGM	105
Typhoon	PAR	103
Little Old New York	FOX	103
Swiss Family Robinson	RKO	103
You'll Fuel Out	RKO	102
I Take This Woman	MGM	102

C

FROM \$100,000 TO \$200,000

Ramparts We Watch	RKO	92
The Farmer's Daughter	PAR	80
Mexican Spitfire Out West	RKO	80

Melody Ranch	REP	78
Blondie Has Servant Trouble	COL	76
Wagons Westward	REP	76
The Marines Fly High	RKO	75
A Child Is Born	WAR	75
Blondie on a Budget	COL	75
Blondie Plays Cupid	COL	75
East of the River	WAR	75
Night Train	FOX	74
Charlie Chan in Panama	FOX	74
Fugitive from a Prison Camp	COL	74
River's End	WAR	73
Cross Country Romance	RKO	73
Twenty-one Days Together	COL	73
Sandy Is a Lady	UNIV	73
Annie of Windy Poplars	RKO	73
Three Faces West	REP	73
Scatterbrain	REP	73
Girl From God's Country	REP	73
Sandy Gets Her Man	UNIV	73
Remedy for Riches	RKO	72
Give Us Wings	UNIV	72
Leatherpushers	UNIV	72
Cherokee Strip	PAR	72
Men Against the Sky	RKO	72
Man Who Wouldn't Talk	FOX	72
Danger On Wheels	UNIV	72
Gambling on the High Seas	WAR	72
Ladies Must Live	WAR	72
Southern Karanga	UNIV	72
Gay Caballero	FOX	72
Murder Over New York	FOX	72
Margie	UNIV	72
San Francisco Docks	UNIV	72

B

FROM \$200,000 TO \$500,000

Andy Hardy Meets a Debutante.....MGM.....143

He Stayed for Breakfast.....COL.....113
His Wife.....UNIV.....113

Brother Orchid	WAR	104
Doctor Takes A Wife	COL	102
Dr. Ehrlich's Magic Bullet	WAR	101
Wyoming	MGM	101
My Love Came Back	WAR	96
Four Mothers	WAR	92
Moon Over Burma	PAR	90

The Great Victor Herbert	PAK	101	Hitler, Beast of Berlin	PDC	78
If I Had My Way	UNIV	100			
Brigham Young	FOX	100			
Go West	MGM	97			
Long Voyage Home	UA	96			
Turnabout	UA	96			
Shop Around the Corner	MGM	95			
Remember the Night	PAR	95			
When the Daltons Rode	UNIV	94			
Green Hell	MGM	94			
Little Nellie Kelly	UNIV	93			
House Across the Bay	UA	93			
Four Sons	FOX	92			
1,000,000 B. C.	UA	92			
They Knew What They Wanted	RKO	90			
21 Mule Team	MGM	90			
No, No, Nanette	RKO	88			
Vigil in the Night	RKO	88			
Seven Sinners	UNIV	88			
Captain Caution	UA	88			
The Light That Failed	PAR	88			
The Earl of Chicago	MGM	88			
Our Town	UA	87			
A Dispatch From Reuters	WAR	87			
Safari	PAR	85			
Kit Carson	UA	84			
Pastor Hall	UA	83			
Dark Command	REP	82			
Rangers of Fortune	PAR	81			
Young People	FOX	81			
Dr. Cyclops	PAR	81			
Bluebird	FOX	80			
Seventeen	PAR	88			
Wil W. Meet Again	WAR	88			
Gong Ho	MGM	88			
It Came From the Sea	WAR	87			
The Great McGinty	PAR	86			
The Lion Has Wings	UA	84			
Invisible Man Returns	UNIV	84			
Castle on the Hudson	WAR	84			
Argentine Nights	UNIV	83			
Bank Dick	UNIV	83			
Trail of the Vigilantes	UNIV	83			
Gold Rush Maids	MGM	82			
South of Suez	MGM	82			
Untamed	PAR	82			
Brother Rat and a Baby	WAR	82			
Man From Dakota	MGM	82			
Escape to Glory	COL	81			
Xmas in July	PAR	81			
Dulcy	MGM	81			
I Want a Divorce	PAR	81			
Flowing Gold	WAR	81			
Angels Over Broadway	COL	80			
The Man I Married	FOX	80			
Slightly Honorable	UA	80			
The Man Who Talked Too Much	WAR	80			
Dr. Kildare Comes Home	MGM	80			
A Night in the Tropics	UNIV	80			
Sidewalks of London	PAR	79			
Too Many Girls	RKO	78			
Dr. Kildare's Strange Case	MGM	78			
Hit Parade of 1941	REP	78			
A Chump At Oxford	UA	77			
Saturday's Children	WAR	77			
The Lady With Red Hair	WAR	76			
The Great Profile	FOX	76			
Tugboat Annie Sails Again	WAR	76			
Star Dust	FOX	76			
He Married His Wife	FOX	76			
Dr. Kildare's Crisis	MGM	76			
Black Friday	UNIV	75			
House of Seven Gables	UNIV	75			
Flight Angels	WAR	75			
Haunted Honeymoon	MGM	75			
Black Out	UA	74			
Dance, Girl, Dance	RKO	74			
Sporting Blood	MGM	74			
Two Girls On Broadway	MGM	74			
Three Cheers For the Irish	WAR	74			
Jennie	FOX	74			
A Little Bit of Heaven	UNIV	73			
Golden Fleece	MGM	73			
Shooting High	FOX	73			
Public Deb No. 1	FOX	73			
Tom Brown's School Days	RKO	73			
Those Were the Days	PAR	72			
Viva Cisco Kid	FOX	72			
The Mummy's Hand	UNIV	71			
Angel From Texas	WAR	71			
World in Flames	PAR	70			
The Quarterback	PAR	70			
Saps at Sea	UA	70			
Phantom Riders	MGM	70			
Adventure in Diamonds	PAR	69			
We Who Are Young	MGM	69			
Hullabaloo	MGM	68			
Crimin' Round the Mountain	PAR	68			
Villain Still Pursued Her	RKO	68			
Money and the Woman	WAR	68			
Tear Gas Squad	WAR	68			
Music in My Heart	COL	68			
I Was An Adventuress	FOX	68			
Little Men	RKO	67			
Lady in Question	COL	67			
Florian	MGM	67			
Earthbound	FOX	67			
Alias The Deacon	UNIV	66			
The Ghost Comes Home	MGM	66			
The Way of All Flesh	PAR	65			
Bill of Divorcement	RKO	65			
Go West	MGM	97			
Long Voyage Home	UA	96			
Turnabout	UA	96			
Shop Around the Corner	MGM	95			
Remember the Night	PAR	95			
When the Daltons Rode	UNIV	94			
Green Hell	MGM	94			
Little Nellie Kelly	UNIV	93			
House Across the Bay	UA	93			
Four Sons	FOX	92			
1,000,000 B. C.	UA	92			
They Knew What They Wanted	RKO	90			
21 Mule Team	MGM	90			
No, No, Nanette	RKO	88			
Vigil in the Night	RKO	88			
Seven Sinners	UNIV	88			
Captain Caution	UA	88			
The Light That Failed	PAR	88			
The Earl of Chicago	MGM	88			
Our Town	UA	87			
A Dispatch From Reuters	WAR	87			
Safari	PAR	85			
Kit Carson	UA	84			
Pastor Hall	UA	83			
Dark Command	REP	82			
Rangers of Fortune	PAR	81			
Young People	FOX	81			
Dr. Cyclops	PAR	81			
Bluebird	FOX	80			
Seventeen	PAR	88			
Wil W. Meet Again	WAR	88			
Gong Ho	MGM	88			
It Came From the Sea	WAR	87			
The Great McGinty	PAR	86			
The Lion Has Wings	UA	84			
Invisible Man Returns	UNIV	84			
Castle on the Hudson	WAR	84			
Argentine Nights	UNIV	83			
Bank Dick	UNIV	83			
Trail of the Vigilantes	UNIV	83			
Gold Rush Maids	MGM	82			
South of Suez	MGM	82			
Untamed	PAR	82			
Brother Rat and a Baby	WAR	82			
Man From Dakota	MGM	82			
Escape to Glory	COL	81			
Xmas in July	PAR	81			
Dulcy	MGM	81			
I Want a Divorce	PAR	81			
Flowing Gold	WAR	81			
Angels Over Broadway	COL	80			
The Man I Married	FOX	80			
Slightly Honorable	UA	80			
The Man Who Talked Too Much	WAR	80			
Dr. Kildare Comes Home	MGM	80			
A Night in the Tropics	UNIV	80			
Sidewalks of London	PAR	79			
Too Many Girls	RKO	78			
Dr. Kildare's Strange Case	MGM	78			
Hit Parade of 1941	REP	78			
A Chump At Oxford	UA	77			
Saturday's Children	WAR	77			
The Lady With Red Hair	WAR	76			
The Great Profile	FOX	76			
Tugboat Annie Sails Again	WAR	76			
Star Dust	FOX	76			
He Married His Wife	FOX	76			
Dr. Kildare's Crisis	MGM	76			
Black Friday	UNIV	75			
House of Seven Gables	UNIV	75			
Flight Angels	WAR	75			
Haunted Honeymoon	MGM	75			
Black Out	UA	74			
Dance, Girl, Dance	RKO	74			
Sporting Blood	MGM	74			
Two Girls On Broadway	MGM	74			
Three Cheers For the Irish	WAR	74			
Jennie	FOX	74			
A Little Bit of Heaven	UNIV	73			
Golden Fleece	MGM	73			
Shooting High	FOX	73			
Public Deb No. 1	FOX	73			
Tom Brown's School Days	RKO	73			
Those Were the Days	PAR	72			
Viva Cisco Kid	FOX	72			
The Mummy's Hand	UNIV	71			
Angel From Texas	WAR	71			
World in Flames	PAR	70			
The Quarterback	PAR	70			
Saps at Sea	UA	70			
Phantom Riders	MGM	70			
Adventure in Diamonds	PAR	69			
We Who Are Young	MGM	69			
Hullabaloo	MGM	68			
Crimin' Round the Mountain	PAR	68			
Villain Still Pursued Her	RKO	68			
Money and the Woman	WAR	68			
Tear Gas Squad	WAR	68			
Music in My Heart	COL	68			
I Was An Adventuress	FOX	68			
Little Men	RKO	67			
Lady in Question	COL	67			
Florian	MGM	67			
Earthbound	FOX	67			
Alias The Deacon	UNIV	66			
The Ghost Comes Home	MGM	66			
The Way of All Flesh	PAR	65			
Bill of Divorcement	RKO	65			
Go West	MGM	97			
Long Voyage Home	UA	96			
Turnabout	UA	96			
Shop Around the Corner	MGM	95			
Remember the Night	PAR	95			
When the Daltons Rode	UNIV	94			
Green Hell	MGM	94			
Little Nellie Kelly	UNIV	93			
House Across the Bay	UA	93			
Four Sons	FOX	92			
1,000,000 B. C.	UA	92			
They Knew What They Wanted	RKO	90			
21 Mule Team	MGM	90			
No, No, Nanette	RKO	88			
Vigil in the Night	RKO	88			
Seven Sinners	UNIV	88			
Captain Caution	UA	88			
The Light That Failed	PAR	88			
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Angel From Texas	WAR	71			
World in Flames	PAR	70			
The Quarterback	PAR	70			
Saps at Sea	UA	70			
Phantom Riders	MGM	70	</		

BRIEF REVIEWS

THE MONSTER AND THE GIRL

PARAMOUNT

The Digest's Box Office Estimate
70%

Director Stuart Heisler
Original Screenplay Stuart Anthony
Featured: Ellen Drew, Robert Paige, Paul Lukas, Joseph Calleia, Onslow Stevens, George Zucco, Rod Cameron, Phillip Terry, Marc Lawrence, Gerald Mohr, Tom Dugan, Willard Robertson, Minor Watson, George F. Meader, Cliff Edwards, Emma Dunn, "Skipper."
Photographer Victor Milner
Time 64 Minutes

Paramount did not aim any higher than the title of this one, and they just about made that grade. If your circuit includes one of those houses where they go hook, line and sinker—plus the war tax—for titles such as "Monster and the Girl," you will do business. And probably satisfy them.

But don't give it to the patrons who expect a touch or two of intelligence in their entertainment unless you are ready to meet the complaints at the door, and to accept the loss of some business for your next week's show while they recover.

There's everything in it for a Welsh rare-bit nightmare from gorillas, to gangsters, to eccentric science that toys with the ape and human brains, right on to an electrocution.

Red meat, but exceedingly on the raw side.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "The Monster and the Girl," which Paramount filmed as 'D.O.A.' is wildly fantastic, utterly unbelievable, and, once in a while, roughly overboard on theatrics. And yet, by virtue of the fact that Director Stuart Heisler is one of the most superb story-tellers working in pictures—which he first showed in 'The Biscuit Eater' and proves here—'The Monster and the Girl' is never dull, never boring or tiresome."

VARIETY: "In its class 'The Monster and the Girl' is a chiller-diller that will send fans of goose-pimpling melodrama from the theatres amply satisfied."

ROBIN HOOD OF THE PECOS

REPUBLIC

The Digest's Box Office Estimate
65%

Associate Producer-Director Joseph Kane
Screenplay Olive Cooper
Original Story Hal Long
Star Roy Rogers
Featured: George Hayes, Marjorie Reynolds, Cy Kendall, Leigh Whipper, Sally Payne, Eddie Acuff, Robert Strange, William Haade, Jay Novello.
Photographer Jack Marta
Time 5 Minutes

"Robin Hood of the Pecos" is a routine job in the Roy Rogers series. It will not help to increased popularity, but neither will it damage. The kids at the Saturday matinees will probably take it, while knowing that their hero will give them a more tightly knit adventure yarn the next time out.

Rogers is a better actor and screen poten-

tiality than the parts he is getting in some of these concocted off-the-cuffs.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "'Robin Hood of the Pecos' does not measure up to its predecessors is due to its flimsy story content and that the title role gives Rogers far too little opportunity to display his talents."

VARIETY: "'Robin Hood of the Pecos' can't be classed up among the better Roy Rogers vehicles but will satisfy the Saturday matinee kid audiences and other western fans who aren't too critical of story material. Ample riding and shooting help to compensate for some dull sequences that slow down the movement."

NOBODY'S CHILDREN

COLUMBIA

The Digest's Box Office Estimate
65%

Producer Jack Fier
Director Charles Barton
Screenplay Doris Malloy
Featured: Walter White, Edith Fellows, Lois Wilson, Billy Lee, Georgia Caine, Janet Chapman, Lillian West, Ben Taggart, Mary Gordon, Dorothy Adams.
Photographer Benjamin Kline
Time 63 Minutes

"Nobody's Children" is just one of those things. Even at a low budget it has been produced sufficiently well to serve its purpose, when you are prepared for audiences that wish to suffer and thrill with the plight of orphans. It has an exploitation angle in the fact that it is based on a radio feature that people tell us is very popular.

Director Barton knows his children and gets the best from them. It is not good entertainment unless you have audiences anxious to weep.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "The picture won't have audiences knocking down doors to see it because of its entertainment values, but those that do see it will give its subject matter considerable thought."

VARIETY: "A simple, sentimental tale, not too well done but amply serving its purpose."

MEET THE CHUMP

UNIVERSAL

The Digest's Box Office Estimate
70%

Associate Producer Ken Goldsmith
Director Edward Cline
Screenplay Alex Gottlieb
Original Story Hal Hudson, Otis Garrett
Star Hugh Herbert
Featured: Lewis Howard, Jeanne Kelly, Anne Nagel, Kathryn Adams, Shemo Howard, Richard Lane, Andrew Tombes, Hobart Cavanaugh, Charles Halton, Martin Spellman, Ed Gargan.
Photographer Elwood Bredell
Art Director Jack Otterson
Time 59 Minutes

The same week that previewed "Road Show" in which the hero pretended to be crazy to escape the marital knot, also brought "Meet the Chump," which rests its fortunes on Hugh Herbert attempting the same act. And since the combination is Herbert for the screwball, and Eddie Cline

for the director, the result comes out as one of the "no holds barred," let 'em laugh, jobs.

A good bet in the price bracket quoted to you. It will send a lot of them out chuckling on the nights when you have been worrying about how the percentage picture at the top would satisfy.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "Of all the zany comedies in which Hugh Herbert has appeared, this is the zaniest and just about the most hilarious. In it, Herbert uses his usual screwball characterization as the 'sane' foundation from which he reaches out trying to pretend he is crazy."

VARIETY: "'Meet the Chump' probably will rate as the best Hugh Herbert starrer yet to come off the Universal lot and rolls up a high score for zany comedy that is practically guaranteed to crack the shell of any sour puss."

PETTICOAT POLITICS

REPUBLIC

The Digest's Box Office Estimate
65%

Associate Producer Robert C. North
Director Erle C. Kenton
Original Screenplay Edward Adamson, Taylor Caven
Featured: Roscoe Karns, Ruth Donnelly, Spencer Charters, George Ernest, Lois Ranson, Polly Moran, Alan Ladd, Jeff Corey, Harry Woods, Paul Hurst, Claire Carleton, Pierre Watkin, Charlie Moore.

Photographer Jack Marta
Time 66 Minutes

The poorman's Hardy family discards legitimacy in this one, and the Higgins group, now without the Gleasons, just goes for the laughs at any and all cost. It's a good number in the series for audiences none too critical, but anxious to get a laugh for their ticket money.

Yarn, which has been directed very much on the broad side, and played with abandon, has Roscoe Karns, the new Higgins family head, kidded into running for mayor, with his opposition a choice collection of mugs. Ruth Donnelly, as his wife, and good old reliable Spencer Charters, highlight the support.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

VARIETY: "Second in the new series of Higgins Family comedies at Republic, 'Petticoat Politics' sets a laugh-pace that will be hard to match in future features of this group. Geared in all departments to bring full entertainment values to the family trade, picture speeds through its 66 minutes without a letdown and is just what the exhibitor needs for the Saturday night trade to bolster product claiming to a more pretentious quality."

REPORTER: "It will be difficult to recognize 'Petticoat Politics' as one of Republic's Higgins Family series, which has built itself through honest family audience appeal—and bright comedy. This one has the comedy, but it is of such ancient vintage that it has long since become vinegar."

New York Daily News

Gives

"TALL, DARK AND HANDSOME"

(Now in Second Week at Roxy)



FOUR STARS



And Says:

IT'S A RIOT
AT THE ROXY
IF YOU'VE ALREADY
USED UP YOUR
MOVIE ALLOWANCE
FOR THE WEEK, BEG
BORROW OR STEAL
FROM NEXT WEEK'S
BUDGET. BUT HOW-
EVER YOU MANAGE
THE PRICE DON'T
MISS IT
—Kate Cameron

Daily Variety:

H. Bruce Humberstone gets himself a handsome director's credit, stepping up amongst the top pilots of the biz for understanding of entertainment values and the skillful craftsmanship to get them across with precision and unerring tempo.

Hollywood Reporter:

This is the outstanding directorial effort to date by H. Bruce Humberstone, demonstrating an exceptional mastery of pace, situation and characterization, equally effective with both dramatic and comedy situations. It has all the ear-marks of a winner.

Director H. Bruce Humberstone rates bravos from the New York reviewers who claim this is the best of all possible gangster satires.

ED SULLIVAN

Directed by

H. BRUCE HUMBERSTONE

Management
BERG-ALLENBERG
Agency, Inc.

**BROADWAY'S
SURPRISE
SENSATION!
HELD OVER**

AT ROXY THEATRE, NEW YORK

for a
2nd SMASH WEEK

★
TALL, DARK *and* HANDSOME

with
Cesar ROMERO ★ Virginia GILMORE
Milton BERLE ★ Charlotte GREENWOOD
and **SHELDON LEONARD • FRANK JENKS • STANLEY CLEMENTS**

BARNETT PARKER

Directed by H. BRUCE HUMBERSTONE

**Associate Producer Fred Kohlmar • Original Screen Play by
Karl Tunberg and Darrell Ware**

**Music and Lyrics by Leo Robin and Ralph Rainger • Dances Staged by
Nicholas Castle and Geneva Sawyer**



Now Playing---LOEW'S STATE and Grauman's CHINESE

Box Office DIGEST

VOLUME 12, NO. 14

54

HOLLYWOOD, CALIF., FEB. 28, 1941

★
*The
Only
Authentic
Box
Office
Figures
Published*

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25c

*The Box Office
Reports:*

LIBRARY

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ACADEMY OF MOTION PICTURES
ARTS AND SCIENCES

'Back Street' Tops Week's New Releases

See Page 5

The Box Office

DIGEST "HONOR BOX"

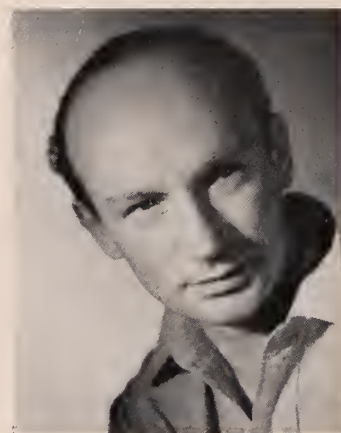
The Biggest Grossing Release Of The Past Week

This Week UNIVERSAL wins with

'BACK STREET' 128%



Producer
BRUCE MANNING



Director
ROBERT STEVENSON

Screenplay
BRUCE MANNING
FELIX JACKSON

Based on Novel by
FANNIE HURST

Photographer
WILLIAM DANIELS

Featured
FRANK McHUGH
TIM HOLT
FRANK JENKS
ESTHER DALE
SAMUEL S. HINDS
PEGGY STUART



CHARLES BOYER



RICHARD CARLSON



MARGARET SULLAVAN

PRODUCER-DIRECTORS

An Editorial by ROBERT E. WELSH

Box Office Digest has long been an advocate—maybe we could call ourselves a pioneer—of producer-director deals as the solution for the worries of many major companies.

We do not say ALL of the companies, because where organization has been built and executive direction is right, the companies have not been in such dire need.

And we do not exactly mean "producer-director" in the limited sense that it applies only to directors who do the two jobs, because there is a closely parallel situation with its good points where a writer teams with a director, or a capable associate producer with a director, having discovered that they have the ability to work in a team.

But the time seems to be ripe to talk about some of the aspects of this situation that will soon be making trouble.

* * *

And the condition that prompts this thought can be stated very briefly:

Not all of the directors ambitious enough, and possessed of sufficient self-confidence, to accept producer-director-partnership deals are going to come out at the right end of the horn.

Which brings us back to a problem that must be twenty years old in this industry.

At least our memory tells us of the days in the 20's when more than one enterprising individual tried to put together combinations of top flight directors willing to invest their own money on their own ability.

But always, there came the stumbling block: "We can't trust those fellows handling the distribution. We can't believe their figures. We can't out-talk their lawyers."

* * *

We believe that attitude—and there was always evidence to be produced to prove that it was not entirely mistaken—cost the picture industry many years of progress, and quite a few dividends.

Because the creators said: "Oh, shucks, it's better to push the SALARY up, since I know what the check reads each week, than to grapple with the accountants who can't even tell me what it was six months ago."

There would have been fewer million dollar flops made by directors who had half a heart in the job—because of executive interferences—in the last

decade if the 1920 desire and willingness of creators to share the worries had been given a chance.

And we know of a couple of companies that would have saved themselves belly-ache pains in recent years if it had not been for some of those million dollar flops.

But in the past year or so the producer-director idea gained more solid ground. We like to feel that Box Office Digest had something to do with its progress.

However, we will be compelled to start apologizing if some current trends are not curbed.

* * *

We can sum up the reasons for those possible apologies:

In the first place, if a top executive makes a producer-director deal, after okaying the story basis—possibly also giving some mutual thought to the star values—on a picture HE SHOULD THEN TAKE HIS HANDS OFF.

If he hasn't the confidence to let the producer-director go through after fundamentals have been agreed upon, he should never have given that individual a producer-director deal in the first place.

Secondly: Do not let the distribution department horn in so close to the deal that the producer-director finds himself needing a battery of lawyers, a couple of FBI men, and a crystal gazer to find out when he is going to make some money.

Don't scare those creators—or you will be right back where you started.

* * *

The top pictures of today are being made by such a variety of talents that it would be foolish to pin any particular label on the word "Success."

We have our top studio executives who give a great share by their willingness to get behind an IDEA, and the ability to assemble the right talent to place that idea on the screen. We have able associate producers who combine some of this knack

with the ability to team up with writers and directors. We have the producer-director set-up. We have our stars with a definite Fort Knox value at box offices.

But all tendencies of the picture business should be aiming at letting those contributing factors work freely, share in profits, be willing to take losses from errors—BUT NOT BE FORCED TO FIGHT WITH EACH OTHER.

DISTRIBUTORS' BATTING AVERAGE FOR 1940

		%
1. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer	46 Releases	100
2. United Artists	21 Releases	99
3. Twentieth Century-Fox	48 Releases	93
4. Warners-First National	46 Releases	90
5. Paramount	42 Releases	87
6. Universal	50 Releases	78
7. RKO-Radio	48 Releases	78
8. Columbia	41 Releases	75
9. Republic	25 Releases	70
10. Monogram	26 Releases	65

*Does not include "Gone With the Wind," 388%, sold under special contract, and produced by David Selznick.

The Highlighter: **Covers the Picture News Front in a Quick Glance**

The preview situation in this hamlet known as Hollywood is getting into a mess . . . If your humble Highlighter had the idea correct, the switch from past methods was made to make previews more intelligent and less ballyhoo . . . That is, to serve the purpose for which the preview is intended—a showing for the WORKING press . . . And not for the autograph givers . . . But now the companies seem to have decided on a new system which makes them low-budget, B-junkets . . . All of which is very fine in that it gives a reporter a free meal and a couple—more or less—of cocktails, but it is taking on too much of the colorful hues of a small time junket . . . One preview last week found a group of critics roused from their seats, chosen as the result of experience in reviewing, to make room for a couple of Governors and a score or more of the director's guests . . . Another found a house manager forced to explain to his audience that the preview would be delayed because the last bus had not arrived from the studio . . . And this after the main title of the picture had appeared on the screen, then suddenly been choked by the projectionist . . . What is the analysis of such happenings? . . . Why can't the companies get down to the straightforward WORKING PRESS preview system of Harry Brand at Twentieth, which satisfies all . . . Or is it because some of the top executives are afraid of the picture's reviews unless they are dressed up in free lunch? . . . They'd better think it over . . . Because some of the reviews on which they place the most importance are written by the boys who have to meet deadlines . . . And even ham and cheese on rye won't compensate for a missed deadline.

ACADEMY AWARDS GET USUAL BUZZ OF TALK

There is nothing new in stating the fact that the town is still expressing its opinions about the Academy Awards . . . That happens almost every year . . . But we have an idea that before another twelve months roll around there may be some action on a new method of classification . . . All awards given were earned, that is admitted unanimously, but there is something screwy about the classifications . . . Here is one of the questions: "If 'Rebecca' was the best picture, why was not Alfred Hitchcock the best director?" . . . And then, "If John Ford was the best director, why was not 'Grapes of Wrath' the best picture?" . . . Fortunately, neither Ford nor Hitchcock are the type to worry about awards, nor the craftsmen to need them . . . To coin a phrase, "their work speaks for them." . . . It was a deserved award to give Major Nathan Levinson recognition for the effort he has contributed technically to aid of the Army and

its Signal Corps work through his labors in sound reproduction . . . Few remember that it was the Major who went through those birth-pain struggles with sound when War-

Academy Winners

OUTSTANDING PRODUCTION

"Rebecca," Selznick-United Artists.

BEST PERFORMANCE BY AN ACTOR

James Stewart, "The Philadelphia Story," Metro.

BEST PERFORMANCE BY AN ACTRESS

Ginger Rogers, "Kitty Foyle," RKO.

BEST PERFORMANCE BY SUPPORTING ACTOR

Walter Brennan, "The Westerner," Goldwyn-United Artists.

BEST PERFORMANCE BY SUPPORTING ACTRESS

Jane Darwell, "The Grapes of Wrath," 20th-Fox.

DIRECTORIAL

John Ford, "The Grapes of Wrath," 20th-Fox.

ORIGINAL MOTION PICTURE STORY

"Arise My Love," Paramount. Benjamin Glazer and John S. Toddy.

SCREENPLAY REGARDLESS OF SOURCE

"The Philadelphia Story," Metro. Donald Ogden Stewart.

ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY

"The Great McGinty," Paramount. Preston Sturges.

ART DIRECTION—Black-and-White

Cedric Gibbons, Paul Groesse, associate, "Pride and Prejudice," Metro.

ART DIRECTION—Color

Vincent Korda, "Thief of Bagdad," Korda-United Artists.

SOUND RECORDING

Douglas Shearer, "Strike Up the Band," Metro.

CINEMATOGRAPHY—Black-and-White

George Barnes, "Rebecca," Selznick-United Artists.

CINEMATOGRAPHY—Color

George Perinal, "Thief of Bagdad," Korda-United Artists.

ORIGINAL MUSIC SCORE

Leigh Harline, Paul J. Smith, Ned Washington, "Pinocchio," Walt Disney.

BEST MUSIC SCORING

Alfred Newman, "Tin Pan Alley," 20th-Fox.

BEST SONG

"When You Wish Upon a Star," "Pinocchio," Walt Disney, by Ned Washington and Lee Harline.

FILM EDITING

Anne Bauchens, "North West Mounted Police," Paramount.

SCIENTIFIC ACHIEVEMENT

20th-Fox for 20th Century silenced camera developed by Daniel Clark, Grover Laube and Robert W. Stevens.

SHORT SUBJECTS—Cartoon

"Milk and Honey," Metro.

One-Reel

"Quicker'n a Wink," Pete Smith Specialty, Metro.

Two-Reel Short

"Teddy the Rough Rider," Warner Brothers, Gordon Hollingshead.

SPECIAL EFFECTS

Lawrence Butler, Jack Whitney, "Thief of Bagdad," Korda-United Artists.

SPECIAL AWARDS

Col. Nathan Levinson. Special award for his outstanding service to the industry and the Army during the past nine years.

Bob Hope, for his outstanding service to the film industry.

ner's were trying to hear Rin-tin-tin bark and Al Jolson sing on celluloid . . . When the award was made the happiest man we saw in the room—if we except bashful Nathan Levinson—was Darryl Zanuck, chairman of the Academy's technical group, and a chairman who takes his job seriously.

JOGGING HERE AND THERE AROUND THE STUDIOS

Guessing at a release date for "Citizen Kane" seems to be getting something like forecasting the sunny California weather . . . None of the evidence yet shows that Hearst has softened, but there are now prospects that all the talk slipping into syndicated columns may build an advance sale for the picture . . . After that it will be up to RKO as a fifty-two week organization to worry about the future . . . Interesting to hear that Monta Bell is in a producer's berth under the new Paramount set-up . . . Monta's record, dating well beyond the squawkie days, has plenty evidence of audience knowledge . . . The colony is giving praise to Welford Beaton's new "Spectator" . . . Just semi-professionally, as it were, we want to add our own congratulations on the score of the fine typographic style, the general effect which makes it easier than ever to travel along with Welford's pungent style—and agree or disagree just as you happen to feel.

ODDS AND ENDS THAT COME TO MIND

"Gone With the Wind" is now out in general release, and we can't figure whether to include it in the regular Digest figures, or just set it aside as a weekly box by itself . . . The popular price runs are just duplicating the sensational totals of the ballyhooed road show engagements . . . Shrewd Leo McCarey has placed Todd Karns, twenty year old son of Roscoe Karns under a personal contract, following his clicking in an Andy Hary spot . . . If we can add two and two, taking McCarey's picture judgement and the pater Karns' own acting ability, that sounds like a solid investment . . . You won't catch MGM nodding . . . They are sitting in reserved seats on the Technicolor bandwagon, maybe as a bit of added insurance against the new selling policies . . . "Cimarron," purchased from RKO, is the latest of their subjects to be rumored for the tints . . . With the possibility that it will marquee Clark Gable and Norma Shearer . . . Mitchell Leisen is wrapped up in that Columbia big deal negotiated by Charlie Feldman which brings Marlene Dietrich to the Gower Street lot . . . Leisen is a pretty safe insurance policy.

The Box Office: 'Back Street' Gets Top Money; 'Blonde' Is Strong

Of 8 New Releases in the Past Week,
2 Ran Over 100%, 2 Came Through
Okay, and 4 Were Very Weak.



UNIVERSAL—1 Release

Universal Pictures takes top honors this week with the new release "BACK STREET" which following its world premier a couple of weeks ago at Miami, Florida, broke in about thirty important key cities with excellent results, averaging 128%.

Most exhibitors will remember that Universal filmed Fannie Hurst's "BACK STREET" some eight or nine years ago co-starring Irene Dunne and John Boles. This time Charles Boyer and Margaret Sullivan are the tops in the famous love melodrama. The featured cast includes Richard Carlson, Frank McHugh, Tim Holt and Frank Jenks.

Bruce Manning, who has been responsible for so many of the past Deanna Durbin scripts was recently elevated to producer-ship by Universal and "BACK STREET" is his first picture—an excellent box office attraction that will make money for both the studio and the exhibitor. Mr. Manning also wrote the screenplay, in collaboration with Felix Jackson, which of course was based on Fannie Hurst's best seller.

Robert Stevenson, one of England's foremost directors who recently came to Hollywood, handled the fine direction on "BACK STREET."

WARNERS—2 Releases

Warners-First National presents two new releases this week, the first an outstanding box office success, while the second is a much better than average programmer.

Raoul Walsh's "STRAWBERRY BLONDE" co-starring Jimmy Cagney and Olivia de Havilland has had a number of

8 New Releases Not in the Last Issue

		%	Est.
Back Street	UNIV	128	125
Strawberry Blonde	WAR	123	135
Mad Doctor	PAR	81	80
Flight from Destiny	WAR	80	85
Girl in the News	FOX	73	75
Ride, Kelly, Ride	FOX	71	70
Devil's Command	COL	70	70
Phantom of Chinatown	MONO	67	65

important openings and is currently averaging 123% which is practically 15% ahead of Walsh's big hit of last month "High Sierra"—but of course there is a difference in the marquee values.

Rita Hayworth, who has gained considerable attention in the past few months, portrays the Strawberry Blonde and other featured players include Alan Hale, Jack Carson and George Tobias.

Bill Cagney acted as associate producer to Hal Wallis.

"STRAWBERRY BLONDE" had several bad openings due to adverse weather conditions and it is our opinion that on future bookings this picture will climb considerably higher.

Warner's second release this week is "FLIGHT FROM DESTINY," 80%. This rather unusual heavy melodrama, is what might be called a perfect critic's picture but not particularly box office for the masses due to its heavy theme and lack of ticket-selling names.

The entire cast is superb, but the players do not have any particular box office value as they are all featured players instead of star names. Geraldine Fitzgerald and Thomas Mitchell are co-featured and the supporting cast includes Jeffrey Lynn, James Stephenson and Mona Maris. Vincent Sherman directed and Edmund Grainger was the associate producer.

PARAMOUNT—1 Release

Paramount's only new release this week is another one of those horror pictures, "THE MAD DOCTOR," which is just getting by at an 80% average. Of course there are types of houses where they liked "Dracula" and "Frankenstein" in which this picture will probably do much better although it is not particularly good for the nabes as it is a bit too heavy for the children.

Basil Rathbone is starred and the romantic leads are portrayed by Ellen Drew and

John Howard with Barbara Allen and Frank Morgan featured. Tim Whelan directed and George Arthur produced under William LeBaron's supervision.

FOX—2 Releases

Twentieth Century-Fox's first release this week is another English importation, "THE GIRL IN THE NEWS," 73%, which was made by the same Fox London unit that produced "Night Train." Margaret Lockwood, who is starred in this murder mystery melodrama, is about the only name in the cast that is familiar to American audiences. Carol Reed directed and Edward Black produced.

Twentieth Century-Fox's second release this week is another Sol Wurtzel programmer, "RIDE, KELLY, RIDE," 71%. Due to the lack of marquee names this one can best be spotted in as filler. Eugene Pallette, Marvin Stephens, Rita Quigley and Mary Healy head the featured cast. Norman Foster directed.

COLUMBIA—1 Release

Columbia's only new release this week, "THE DEVIL'S COMMAND," 70%, is another of the Boris Karloff horror pictures. Amanda Duff and Richard Fisk are featured. This insignificant programmer from the Irving Briskin unit is passable for a filler or for a bank night booking if you don't play to too many kiddies.

MONOGRAM—Also 1 Release

Monogram's new release this week "THE PHANTOM IN CHINATOWN," 67%, (which incidentally is the third murder melodrama in the week) is another programmer in the series featuring Keye Luke. Grant Withers and Lotus Long are in the cast. Capable Phil Rosen directed and Paul Malvern produced.

8 FEATURES "GOING DOWN"

		Was	Now
High Sierra	WAR	115	112
Son of Monte Cristo	UA	100	95
You're the One	PAR	90	87
Three on a Honeymoon	WAR	85	80
South of Suez	WAR	82	80
Remedy for Riches	COL	72	70
San Francisco Docks	UNIV	72	70
Drums of the Desert	MONO	62	60

6 FEATURES "GOING UP"

		Was	Now
Kitty Foyle	RKO	140	143
Mr. and Mrs. Smith	RKO	118	123
Come Live With Me	MGM	104	107
Maisie Was a Lady	MGM	84	86
Buck Privates	UNIV	82	86
Escape to Glory	COL	81	83



'BACK STREET'

A UNIVERSAL PICTURE

THE
HONOR
BOX
WINNER

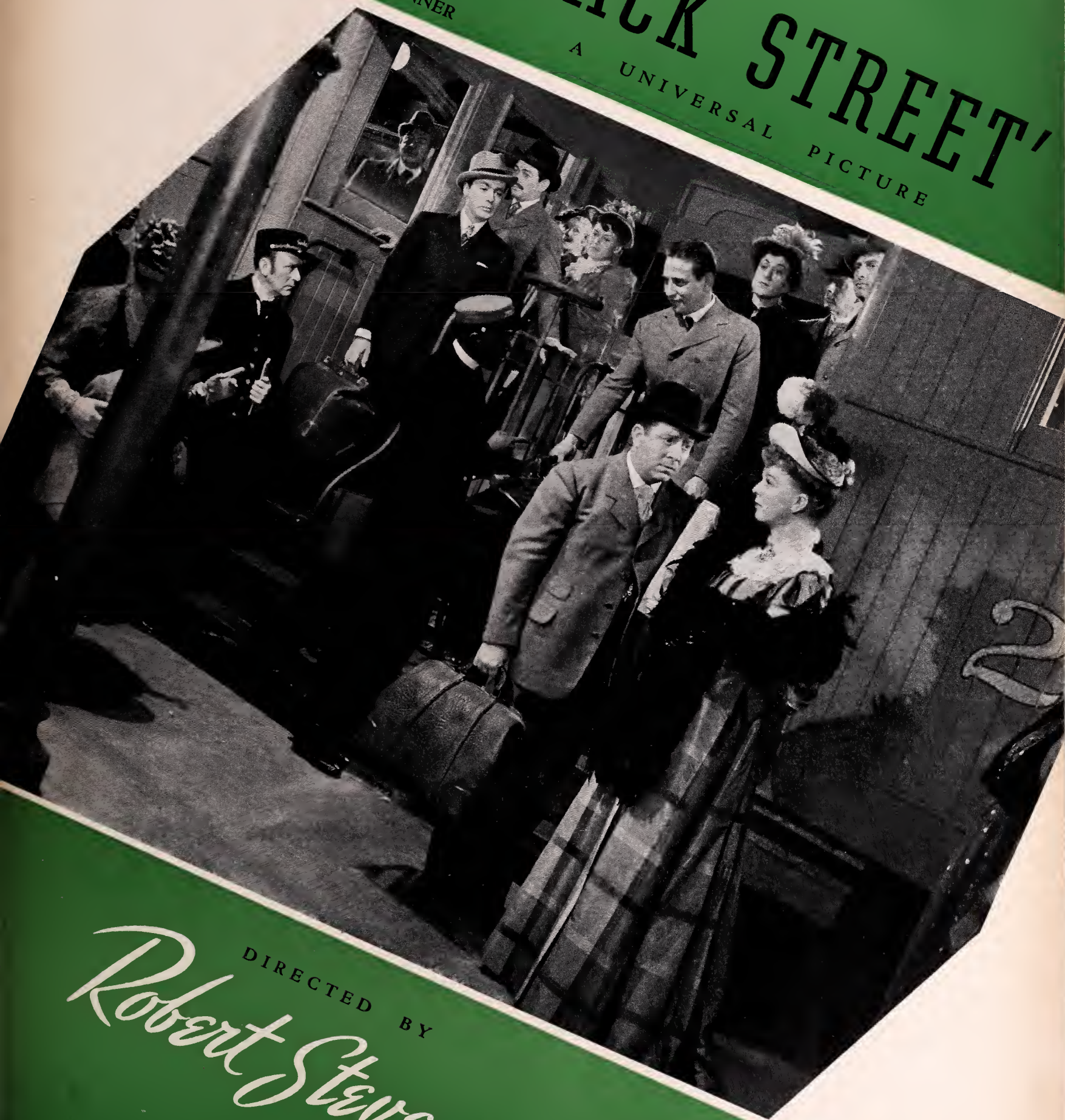
PRODUCED BY

Bruce Manning

THE
HONOR
BOX
WINNER

'BACK STREET'

A UNIVERSAL PICTURE



DIRECTED BY

Robert Stevenson

'Footsteps in the Dark' Presents New Errol Flynn

WARNERS

The Digest's Box Office Estimate
110%

Executive Producer Hal Wallis
Associate Producer Robert Lord
Director Lloyd Bacon
Screenplay Lester Cole, John Wexley
From the Play by Lazlo Fodor,
Bernard Merivale, Jeffrey Dell
Stars Errol Flynn, Brenda Marshall
Featured: Ralph Bellamy, Alan Hale, Allen
Jenkins, William Frawley, Lee Patrick, Lu-
cile Watson, Roscoe Karns, Grant Mitchell,
Maris Wrixon, Noel Madison, Jack LaRue,
Turhan Bey.
Photographer Ernie Haller
Time 93 Minutes

Lloyd Bacon takes Errol Flynn over the comedy hurdles in "Footsteps in the Dark," and merrily, too. It would seem to be a picture which Flynn played with his tongue in his cheek, while Bacon used all the wiles of his long experience to be certain that not a possible laugh was lost.

The general effect is that everybody seems to be having a good time, and it is a safe bet that audiences will too. Even if it is not a swashbuckling epic of the conventional Errol Flynn offerings.

"Footsteps in the Dark" is in the "Thin Man" classification of mysteries, which puts the accent on the laughs, and doesn't worry any too much about the plot. As a matter of fact, they could have given Director Bacon a little more strength in plot to hold

the second half of the picture up to the early reels. The script goes a little too haywire, thus putting the burden entirely on the director.

The yarn finds Flynn a full-fledged member of Society's Who's Who, with a penchant for dabbling in crime detection. He actually writes detective stories, but must lead a double life because he couldn't let his blue-blooded relatives know his shame.

That's a simple, and very excellent springboard for a lot of fun. You don't need us to tell you that murders start happening, that there are dumb cops involved, that Flynn is in continual hot water trying to lead his double life while relatives ponder his eccentricities.

Brenda Marshall has the role opposite Flynn, playing capably, but not looking her

best even with Ernie Haller on the camera. Lucille Watson and Allen Jenkins top the support, with Roscoe Karns, Ralph Bellamy and Jack La Rue getting good moments.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: Not a Flynn million dollar epic, but a good audience bet that his fans will welcome. Previewed Feb. 26th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "This is just about the most entertaining tongue-in-cheek mystery affair of the new order yet made. It is hilarious satire which takes all the sacred cows of the old-time film detective yarn formula and manhandles them unmercifully via the laugh route."

VARIETY: "This is a farced murder mystery, which means it's played for laughs instead of suspense. As such a whodunit, 'Footsteps in the Dark' rings the bell it aims at."

Current Reviews

		We Est.
Footsteps in the Dark	WAR	110
Lady Eve	PAR	105
A Girl, A Guy, and a Gob	RKO	90
Blondie Goes Latin	COL	80
Melody for Three	RKO	75
Flying Wild	MONO	65

'Blondie Goes Latin'---With Song and Dance

COLUMBIA

The Digest's Box Office Estimate
80%

Producer Robert Sparks
Director Frank R. Strayer
Screenplay Richard Flournoy, Karen DeWolf
Original Quinn Martin
Based on Comic Strip by Chic Young
Stars Penny Singleton, Arthur Lake, Larry Sims
Featured: Ruth Terry, Tito Guizar, Jonathan
Hale, Danny Mummert, Irving Bacon, Janet
Burston, Kirby Grant, Joseph King, Eddie
Acuff, Daisy.
Photographer Henry Freulich
Time 68 Minutes

They have backed up the standard—and popular—gags of the Blondie series in "Blondie Goes Latin" with song and dance. The result is a pretty good hour or so of entertainment for those welcome customers we call "the family audience."

Producer Robert Sparks and Director Frank Strayer are in full stride now in the handling of this series. They are not bashful about using hoke, when hoke will get a laugh; and by this time they know their players, and the comic strip characters they represent, so well that they seldom miss aim when gunning for that laugh.

The cast is also happily at home, with Penny Singleton and Arthur Lake more and more welcome as assurance of a bushle-basketful of screwy laughs. And, of course, we still have Larry Simms and Daisy, Andy

Mummert, and capable Jonathan Hale as the fuss-budget boss.

A supporting cast somewhat above the grade of previous episodes adds to the values of "Blondie Goes Latin." Ruth Terry and Tito Guizar give value to the songs, Eddie Acuff is on hand for good comedy moments. Incidentally, Miss Singleton also does a little vocalizing and dance stepping, and right well she does it, too.

The events of this chapter all happen because the boss invites Dagwood and Blondie for a yachting vacation, and the trouble starts when Dagwood fails to go ashore to close a business deal and must hide himself here, there and everywhere about the yacht. That's skeleton enough, the rest is gags and music.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: Top quality for the series, with the music giving it added appeal. Previewed Feb. 19th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "The film is better produced and more expertly and expensively cast than any of its predecessors. It combines good story, action, excellent music—and good old corn."

VARIETY: "Followers of the screen adventures of Chic Young's Blondie, Dagwood, Baby Dumpling and Daisy are in for some surprises. They will chuckle and roar at the familiar mishaps that befall the Bumpstead family, but whether they will like the mixing of the swell gags with song and dance numbers which are allowed to run too long remains to be seen."

ALL MAJOR FEATURES RELEASED IN 1941

Philadelphia Story	MGM	181
Kitty Foyle	RKO	143
This Thing Called Love	COL	130
Back Street	UNIV	128
Strawberry Blonde	WAR	123
Mr. and Mrs. Smith	RKO	123
Flight Command	MGM	115
High Sierra	WAR	112
Hudson's Bay	FOX	109
Come Live With Me	MGM	107
Cheers for Miss Bishop	UA	105
Son of Monte Cristo	UA	95
Tall, Dark and Handsome	FOX	90
You're the One	PAR	87
Victory	PAR	87
Maisie Was a Lady	MGM	86
Buck Privates	UNIV	86
Mad Doctor	PAR	81
Three on a Honeymoon	WAR	80
Ellery Queen, Master Detective	COL	80
Six Lessons from Madame LaZonga	UNIV	80
Flight from Destiny	WAR	80
Texas Rangers Ride Again	PAR	78
Invisible Woman	UNIV	78
Road Show	UA	76
Life With Henry	PAR	75
Romance of the Rio Grande	FOX	73
Girl in the News	FOX	73
Lucky Devils	UNIV	72
Phantom Submarine	COL	72
Golden Hoofs	FOX	72
Keeping Company	MGM	71
Ride, Kelly, Ride	FOX	71
Where Did You Get That Girl	UNIV	70
Convoy	RKO	70
She Couldn't Say No	WAR	70
Michael Shayne, Private Detective	FOX	70
Let's Make Music	RKO	70
Land of Liberty	MGM	70
The Case of the Black Parrot	WAR	70
Devil's Command	COL	70
Barnyard Follies	REP	69
Bowery Boy	REP	68
Saint in Palm Springs	RKO	67
Phantom of Chinatown	MONO	67
Her First Romance	MONO	66
Pride of the Bowery	MONO	63
The Old Swimming Hole	MONO	60

Barbara Stanwyck Clicks in 'The Lady Eve'

105%

PARAMOUNT

The Digest's Box Office Estimate

Producer Paul Jones
 Written and Directed by Preston Sturges
 Screenplay Based on Story by Monckton Hoffer
 Stars Barbara Stanwyck, Henry Fonda
 Featured: Charles Coburn, Eugene Pallette, William Demarest, Eric Blore, Melville Cooper, Janet Beecher, Robert Greig, Luis Alberni.
 Photographer Victor Milner
 Time 90 Minutes

The Paul Jones-Preston Sturges team has come up with another entertaining picture, sparkling with the originalities in direction that marked "The Great McGinty." But we cannot go all the way with the critics who consider it the best of the series. At the same time we are compelled to back-track a bit to declare that you apparently cannot get this producer-director combination together without finishing up on the right side of the entertainment ledger.

Chief trouble, if anything, with "The Lady Eve" is that it is a "contrived" story. Things happen, and characters act, just as the man at the typewriter keys desires them to unfold.

But chief virtues are many—first, those Sturges touches in direction which are causing critics to toss off the phrase, "the Lubitsch touch;" second a superb cast, topped by a Barbara Stanwyck performance that is a gem.

As a matter of fact, we guess we must come to the realization that, on its own, this picture would be getting a blanket okay from us. It must be the comparisons with "The Great McGinty" and "Christmas in July" that have us using the qualifying words. And that isn't entirely fair, though it may help to keep Mr. Sturges from swallowing all the haphazard adjectives tossed at his brow.

"The Lady Eve" gains its greatest values

through the ability of Barbara Stanwyck to put over a role that could have so easily fallen apart. That little gal is an actress for our money, any day, in light frothy comedy or heavy drama. When you combine Stanwyck with the Sturges particular quality of topping a scene, or even his skill in finding a new approach to a gag sequence, you have something. You would have had something better had the story had more strength.

Of course, by now, you will like to hear what the story is about. Well, stating it roughly, it is a Preston Sturges viewpoint on what a bedroom farce should be. Comedy rules the waves for three quarters of the

way, but when you are playing with tinsel as thin as this, you inevitably get that shock when the plot must round up to a semblance of reality and common sense.

Miss Stanwyck and her father, Charles Coburn, are introduced as a pair of unique card sharks. She baits the suckers, and Coburn reels them in. This is established, and then, lo and behold, Henry Fonda comes into view. He is the son of wealth, but girl shy. In no time Barbara has him eating out of her hand. Of course, the gal falls in love with the boy, forgets her profession, and then comes the day of reckoning when her character is exposed.

Comes the lapse of time, and a new story in which Barbara wins him back, largely because she so much resembles the girl he fell in love with in the early reels.

It is Barbara Stanwyck's picture, and she goes to town with the role. It takes a couple of reels to recognize Henry Fonda after the heavy epics he has been identified with, but he is seen to swell advantage as a frustrated son of Midas. Charles Coburn stands out in support, with Eugene Pallette, William Demarest, Eric Blore, and Melville Cooper, all good troupers and true, rounding out a fine cast.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: Good audience, and a swell laugh bet to balance with a more meller subject. Previewed Feb. 2th.

Brief Reviews

UNDER TEXAS SKIES

(Republic)

An okay job in the action field, with Bob Livingstone, Bob Steele, and Rufe Davis, the Republic "Three Mesquitters" trio, providing the action. You will not be surprised by any originality in the plot, but neither will your audiences for this type of action entertainment be disappointed. The producers know their stuff in this field.

YOUNG BILL HICKOCK

(Republic)

Roy Rogers, who should be getting a chance at better things, carries this chapter in his Republic history through to satisfactory results. Screenplay and direction have been capably handled in the manner of experienced concoctors of horse opera thrills, and Rogers combines the heroics with entertaining melody.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "Every male who ever stretched his neck to look after a shapely leg, every female who ever baited a trap for a man, will delight in Preston Sturges' 'The Lady Eve'—it may well become one of the big screen hits of the year."

VARIETY: "Maintaining his swift-won repute for smart direction, in addition to longer repute as a screen writer, Preston Sturges in 'The Lady Eve' has mined some of the oldest entertainment values of stage and film to show how much pay dirt there yet is left in these tailings."

'Dead End Kids' in Timely Aviation Yarn

MONOGRAM

The Digest's Box Office Estimate

65%

Producer Sam Katzman
 Associate Producer Pete Mayer
 Director William West
 Original Screenplay Al Martin
 Featured: Leo Gorcey, Bobby Jordan, Joan Barclay, Dave O'Brien, George Pembroke, Sunshine Sammy Morrison, David Gorcey, Donald Raines, Eugene Francis, Bobby Stone, Herbert Rawlinson, Dennis Moore, Forrest Taylor, Bob Hill.
 Photographer Fred Jackman, Jr.
 Time 63 Minutes

We are no longer certain whether to call them The Dead End Kids, The East Side Kids, or Just Tough Kids, but here they are

again. And this time in an aviation yarn the timeliness of which should help business for Monogram exhibitors.

The producers and the players combined in an entertaining job, too. It really seems to be aimed at the Saturday matinee juvenile rooters, but as such, has its balance of near-thrills and comedy to give plenty of satisfaction.

It appears that most of the gang got jobs in an aeroplane factor, but none of that hard labor for Leo Gorcey. So what happens? Well the toughies come upon evidence of sabotage. Well, that's a different thing with Leo, he goes to work with the gang to ruin that dirty gang of spies. And the boys do the job in typical rough and tumble Dead End Kid fashion.

Adult support is in good hands, and Di-

rector William West made the most of his blushing budget.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: Juvenile entertainment, fine for those matinees. Previewed Feb. 24th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "Good direction and nice performances, plus some amusing comedy, give the picture much-needed help, since the story itself is unconvincing, spotted with too many incredible situations and suffers from much dialog which is weak and seemingly haphazard when it is not stilted or forced."

VARIETY: "'Flying Wild' has a juvenile flavor, in addition to the tough East Side Kids who carry majority of the story burden on stout shoulders, and as such will furnish some hilarious entertainment for youthful audiences in the subsequent trade houses."



“REBECCA”

*Academy Award for the
Best Production of 1940*

*With gratitude to the
makers and the voters*

DAVID O. SELZNICK

1940

**ACADEMY
AWARD**

Twentieth Century-Fox

*Gratefully Acknowledges
the Achievements of*

JOHN FORD

Best Direction
"THE GRAPES OF WRATH"

JANE DARWELL

For the Best Performance
by a
Supporting Player

ALFRED NEWMAN

For the
Best Musical Score
"TIN PAN ALLEY"

Best Technical Achievement

Blimpless Silent Camera

DANIEL CLARK
GROVER LAUBE
CHARLES MILLER
ROBERT STEVENS

1940

**ACADEMY
AWARD**



RKO Radio Pictures

thanks the Academy of Motion Picture
Arts and Sciences on the Occasion of
its Thirteenth Annual Awards

and Congratulates

GINGER ROGERS

for the Year's
Best Performance
in

"KITTY FOYLE"

1940

**ACADEMY
AWARD**

'Girl, Gob and Guy' Has Plenty Laughs

RKO-RADIO

90%

The Digest's Box Office Estimates

Producer Harold Lloyd
 Director Richard Wallace
 Writers Frank Ryan, Bert Granet, Grover Jones
 Stars George Murphy, Lucille Ball
 Featured: Edmond O'Brien, Henry Travers, Franklin Pangborn, George Cleveland, Kathleen Howard, Marguerite Chapman, Lloyd Corrigan, Mady Correll, Frank McGlynn, Douglas Weaver, Frank Sully, Nella Walker, Richard Lane, Irving Bacon, Rube Demarest.

Gag-conscious to the n'th degree, "A Girl, a Guy, and a Gob" winds up its allotted time on the screen as a picture that will bring some of those "out-loud" laughs back to many a theater. It has sufficient situation and gag moments of hilarity to make most customers forget that the story isn't really so hot.

"A Girl, a Guy, and a Gob," is Harold Lloyd's debut as a producer of pictures in

which he does not appear. Combining with Director Richard Wallace, he has put all the years of his career—and Wallace has many years too—into giving lessons to many budding producers on the timing, the milking, the exhausting of a comedy situation.

The result of the combination of talents is a picture that will give a ton size load of laughs, but which might have been better if story structure had given it a faster opening, and built to a topper finish.

And one important result of the picture is the manner in which it establishes George Murphy as a comedian. Murphy's role will do him a lot of good with the fans. Mebbe his home lot will realize that the boy has a lot more on the ball than they have yet extracted.

The story is a skeleton triangle one, with the emphasis on the laughs, which finds George Murphy the gob, Lucille Ball the girl, and Edmund O'Brien the guy. Murphy's characterization can best be told in

two words when we report that he is known as Coffee Cup, one of those do and dare fellers who will do anything in a pinch. Lucille is the girl who is semi-tied-up to him, but you—and Murphy—know all along that he is too irresponsible to be a safe mate for anyone. O'Brien is the solid romantic interest, winning out in the end.

Producer Lloyd has insured his picture with a corking supporting cast of troupers who know their timing and their laughs. George Cleveland, a character trouper who will be grabbed some day from obscurity just as Walter Brennan was, takes full advantage of a fine opportunity.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: Critics may haggle about story strength, but the mass customers will be happy with the laughs. There are typical Lloyd sequences—without Lloyd—that rocked the house at the preview. Previewed Feb. 28th.

'Dr. Christian' Adds Music to His Methods

STEPHENS-LANG-RKO

The Digest's Box Office Estimate

75%

Producer William Stephens
 Director Erle C. Kenton
 Original Screenplay Walter Ferris, Lee Loeb
 Star Jean Hersholt
 Featured: Fay Wray, Walter Woolf King, Schuyler Standish, Patsy Lee Parsons, Maude Eburne, Astrid Allwyn, Irene Ryan, Donnie Allen, Leon Tyler, Andrew Tombes, Irene Shirley, Alexander Leftwich.
 Photographer John Alton
 Time 67 Minutes

All our series pictures seem to be going for musical additions in recent weeks, and Dr. Christian is not going to be the exception. In "Melody For Three" we get all the top family audience values of the Dr. Christian formula, plus a skillful blending of music.

Jean Hersholt is on hand for his consis-

tent performance as the healer of River's End, whose problems are more often the patching up of human worries than of human maladies. The music accent is in the introduction to the screen of thirteen year old Schuyler Standish, a really promising prodigy. And that is because of the fact that, in addition to his wizardry with the violin, the youngster also has personality and the ability to act without seeming to act.

Producers Stephens-Lang have backed the star up with a supporting cast above average for the series. Walter Woolf King, Fay Wray, and Astrid Allwyn get the best opportunities, with Maude Eburne carrying on in her successful way as the medico's housekeeper.

The story has Dr. Christian patching up the tangled family affairs of a music teacher in River's End, her estranged husband

who has become a prominent symphony conductor, and the youngster whose life problems are involved in this marital split. Dr. Christian heals all.

Erle Kenton turned in a fine job of direction in mixing his story with the music to get full benefits.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: Adds new value to the series. Previewed Feb. 26th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "With 'Melody for Three,' William Stephens attains full stature as a topflight producer. This picture is much more than merely the best of the Dr. Christian series, which it is, by a considerable margin. It is well able to stand on its own feet, without benefit of series buildup, as delightful entertainment."

VARIETY: "As the latest in the 'Dr. Christian' series turned out by Stephens-Lang for RKO release, 'Melody for Three' offers excellent family entertainment, spotted with good music, to qualify for supporting brackets in all situations."

FOR REVIEWS

THAT SAY

SOMETHING

Box

Office

Digest

All Major Features Released in 1940

A

OVER \$500,000

Gone With the Wind	MGM	388
Boom Town	MGM	232
North West Mounted Police	PAR	202
The Dictator	UA	184
Philadelphia Story	MGM	181
Grapes of Wrath	FOX	178
Rebecca	UA	170
Strike Up the Band	MGM	161
Northwest Passage	MGM	154
The Fighting 69th	WAR	151
Sea Hawk	WAR	151
Tim Pan Alley	FOX	150
Santa Fe Trail	WAR	144
My Favorite Wife	RKO	143
Virginia City	WAR	142
Road To Singapore	PAR	141
I Love You Again	MGM	141
All This and Heaven Too	WAR	140

Comrade X	MGM	139
Love Thy Neighbor	PAR	139
Mark of Zorro	FOX	138
It's A Date	UNIV	137
Knute Rockne	WAR	136
New Moon	MGM	135
Lillian Russell	FOX	133
Lillian Russell	MGM	131
Strange Cargo	MGM	130
Escape	RKO	130
Pinocchio	FOX	130
Down Argentine Way	FOX	130

The Letter	WAR	128
Buck Benny Rides Again	PAR	127
His Girl Friday	COL	126
The Ghost Breakers	PAR	124
Thief of Bagdad	UA	124
They Drive by Night	WAR	123
Johnny Apollo	FOX	122
Arise My Love	PAR	121
Rhythm on the River	PAR	121
Pride and Prejudice	MGM	121
Foreign Correspondent	UA	121

Swanee River	FOX	119
City of Conquest	WAR	119
Third Finger Left Hand	MGM	118
Bitter Sweet	MGM	117
The Westerner	UA	117
Torrid Zone	WAR	116
Waterloo Bridge	MGM	116
Spring Parade	UNIV	115
No Time for Comedy	WAR	115
Broadway Melody of 1940	MGM	115
Arizona	COL	114
Young Tom Edison	MGM	113
Edison, The Man	MGM	113
Chad Hanna	FOX	112
Lucky Partners	RKO	112
Primrose Path	RKO	112
My Little Chickadee	UNIV	112
Maryland	FOX	111
Mortal Storm	MGM	111

My Son, My Son	UA	109
Irene	RKO	108
Too Many Husbands	COL	108
Return of Frank James	FOX	107
Second Chorus	PAR	107
South of Pago Pago	UA	106
Boys from Syracuse	UNIV	106
Susan and God	MGM	105
Howards of Virginia	COL	105
Typoon	PAR	103
Little Old New York	FOX	103
Swiss Family Robinson	RKO	103
You'll Find Out	RKO	102
I Take This Woman	MGM	102

B

FROM \$200,000 TO \$500,000

Andy Hardy Meets a Debutante.....MGM.....143

C

FROM \$100,000 TO \$200,000

Ramparts We Watch	RKO	92
Night Train	FOX	81
The Farmer's Daughter	PAR	80
Mexican Spitfire Out West	RKO	80
Melody Ranch	REP	78
Blondie Has Servant Trouble	COL	76
Wagons Westward	REP	76
The Marines Fly High	RKO	75
A Child Is Born	WAR	75
Blondie on a Budget	COL	75
Blondie Plays Cupid	COL	75
East of the River	WAR	75
Charlie Chan in Panama	FOX	74
Fugitive from a Prison Camp	COL	74
River's End	WAR	73
Cross Country Romance	RKO	73
Twenty-one Days Together	COL	73
Sandy Is a Lady	UNIV	73
Anne of Windy Poplars	RKO	73
Three Faces West	REP	73
Scatterbrain	REP	73
Girl From God's Country	REP	73
Sandy Gets Her Man	UNIV	73
Leatherpushers	UNIV	72
Cherokee Strip	PAR	72
Men Against the Sky	RKO	72
Man Who Wouldn't Talk	FOX	72
Danger On Wheels	UNIV	72
Gambling on the High Seas	WAR	72
Ladies Must Live	WAR	72
Sootin at Karanga	UNIV	72
Gay Caballero	FOX	71
Murder Over New York	FOX	71
Margie	UNIV	71
Four Wolf Keeps a Date	COL	71
Diamond Frontier	UNIV	71

He Stayed for Breakfast.....COL.....113
flred Wife.....UNIV.....113

Brother Orchid.....WAR.....104
Doctor Takes A Wife.....COL.....102
Dr. Ehrlich's Magic Bullet.....WAR.....101
Wyoming.....MGM.....101
My Love Came Back.....WAR.....96
You'll Find Out.....RKO.....102
Moon Over Burma.....PAR.....90

D

BELOW \$100,000

The Great Victor Herbert	PAR	101
If I Had My Way	UNIV	100
Brigham Young	FOX	100
Go West	MGM	97
Turnabout	UA	96
Shop Around the Corner	MGM	95
Remember the Night	PAR	95
When the Daltons Rode	UNIV	94
Little Nellie Kelly	MGM	94
Green Hell	UNIV	93
Across the Day	UA	93
Long Voyage Home	FOX	92
Four Sons	UA	92
4,000,000 B. C.	UA	92
They Knew What They Wanted	RKO	90
21 Mule Team	MGM	90
No, No, Nanette	RKO	88
Vigil in the Night	RKO	88
Seven Sinners	UNIV	88
Captain Caution	UA	88
The Light That Failed	PAR	88
The Earl of Chicago	MGM	88
Our Town	UA	87
A Dispatch From Reuters	WAR	87
Safari	PAR	85
Kit Carson	UA	84
Pastor Hall	UA	84
Dark Command	REP	82
Rangers of Fortune	PAR	81
Young People	FOX	81
Dr. Cyclops	PAR	81
Bluebird	FOX	80
La Conga Nights	UNIV	71
Dr. Christian Meets the Women	RKO	71
Courageous Dr. Christian	RKO	71
All Women Have Secrets	PAR	71
As Young As You Feel	FOX	71
Honeymoon Deferred	UNIV	71
Granny Get Your Gun	WAR	71
City of Chance	FOX	71
Castle on the Hudson	UNIV	71
Lucky Cisco Kid	MGM	71
Sky Murder	FOX	71
Girls Under 21	COL	71
Devil's Pipeline	UNIV	71
San Francisco Docks	UNIV	70
Remedy for Riches	RKO	70
Youth Will Be Served	FOX	70
The Great Plane Robbery	COL	70
Charter Pilot	FOX	70
I'm Nobody's Baby Now	UNIV	70
Private Affairs	UNIV	70
I Married Adventure	COL	70
Millionaires in Prison	RKO	70
Half a Sinner	UNIV	70
Saint's Double Trouble	RKO	70
Philo Vance Comes Back	WAR	70
Black Diamonds	UNIV	70
Millionaire Playboy	RKO	70
Queen of the Mob	PAR	70
Wild Cat Bus	RKO	70
Calling All Husbands	WAR	70
Slightly Tempted	UNIV	70
Charlie Chan in the Wax Museum	FOX	70
Meet The Wildcat	UNIV	70
So You Won't Talk	COL	70
Gallant Sons	MGM	70
The Captain Is a Lady	MGM	69
Mexican Spitzire	RKO	69
French Without Tears	PAR	69
Parole Fixer	PAR	69
Hot Steel	UNIV	69
Five Little Peppers Out West	COL	69
You're Not So Tough	UNIV	69
Sailor's Lady	FOX	69
Give Us Wings	UNIV	68
Double Alibi	UNIV	68
Charlie Chan's Murder Cruise	FOX	68
The Saint Takes Over	RKO	68
On Their Own	FOX	68
Free, Blonde and 21	FOX	68
British Intelligence	WAR	68
Calling Philo Vance	WAR	68
Mad Empress	WAR	68
Men Without Souls	COL	68
I Can't Give You Anything But Love	UNIV	68
Mystery Sea Raider	PAR	68
Before I Hang	COL	67
Dancing On a Dime	PAR	67
Beyond Tomorrow	UNIV	67
Ma, He's Making Eyes at Me	RKO	67
Lone Wolf Meets a Lady	COL	67
Women Without Names	PAR	67
Pier 13	FOX	67
Glamour for Sale	COL	67
A Night at Earl Carroll's	PAR	67
I'll Abner	RKO	67
She Couldn't Say No	WAR	67
Stranger on the Third Floor	RKO	67
Dreaming Out Loud	RKO	66
Escape to Paradise	RKO	66
Pop Always Pays	RKO	66
Zanzibar	UNIV	66
King of the Lumberjacks	WAR	66
Girl in 313	FOX	66
Murder in the Air	FOX	66
Manhattan Heartbeat	FOX	66
Love, Honor and Oh Baby	UNIV	66
You Can't Fool Your Wife	RKO	66
Girl from Avenue A	FOX	66
One Crowded Night	RKO	66
Golden Gloves	PAR	66
Street of Memories	FOX	66
Always a Bride	WAR	65
Isle of Destiny	RKO	65
Enemy Agent	UNIV	65
Opened By Mistake	PAR	65
The Fugitive	UNIV	65
Ski Patrol	UNIV	64
And One Was Beautiful	MGM	64
Laddie	RKO	63
Curtain Call	RKO	63
Fugitive From Justice	WAR	63
They Came By Night	GB	62
Women in the War	REP	62
So This Is London	FOX	61
Biscuit	PAR	61

Who Is Guilty	MONO	69
Grand Ole Opry	REP	68
Outside the 3 Mile Limit	COL	68
Son of the Navy	MONO	68
The Phantom Strikes	COL	68
The Fatal Hour	MONO	68
Two Thoroughbreds	RKO	68
Framed	UNIV	68
Girls of the Road	COL	68
Girl From Havana	REP	67
In Old Missouri	REP	67
Crooked Road	REP	67
Little Orvie	RKO	67
Hidden Enemy	MONO	67
Thou Shalt Not Kill	REP	67
Mv Son Is Guilty	COL	67
Sing, Dance, Plenty Hot	REP	67
Dark Streets of Cairo	UNIV	67
Friendly Neighbors	REP	66
That Gang of Mine	MONO	66
Mad Men of Europe	COL	66
Convicted Woman	COL	66
Midnight Limited	MONO	66
Grandpa Goes To Town	REP	66
Who Killed Aunt Maggie	REP	66
Passport to Alcatraz	COL	66
Haunted House	MONO	66
Island of Doomed Men	COL	65
The Man With Nine Lives	COL	65
Earl of Puddletown	REP	65
Military Academy	COL	65
Nobody's Children	COL	65
Forgotten Girls	REP	64
Secret Seven	COL	64
Last Alarm	MONO	63
East Side Kids	MONO	63
Boys of the City	MONO	63
Doomed to Die	MONO	63
Peppers in Trouble	COL	63
Up In The Air	MONO	63
I'm Still Alive	RKO	63
Meet the Missus	REP	63
The Danger Flight	MONO	62
On The Spot	MONO	62
Trailing Double Trouble	MONO	62
Laughing at Danger	MONO	62
Miracle on Main Street	COL	61
Torpedo Raider	MONO	61
Babies for Sale	COL	61
Drums of the Desert	MONO	60
Mysterious Mr. Reeder	MONO	59
Tomboy	MONO	58
The Secret Four	MONO	58

Seventeen	PAR	88
'Til We Meet Again	WAR	88
Congo Maisie	MGM	88
It All Came True	WAR	87
The Great McGinty	PAR	86
The Lion Has Wings	UA	84
Invisible Man Returns	UNIV	84
Castle on the Hudson	WAR	84
Argentine Nights	UNIV	83
Bank Dick	UNIV	83
Trail of the Vigilantes	UNIV	83
Escape to Glory	COL	83
Gold Rush Maisie	MGM	82
Untamed	PAR	82
Brother Rat and a Baby	WAR	82
Man From Dakota	MGM	82
Xmas in July	PAR	81
Dulcy	MGM	81
I Want a Divorce	PAR	81
South of Suez	WAR	80
Flowing Gold	WAR	80
Angels Over Broadway	COL	80
The Man I Married	FOX	80
Slightly Honorable	UA	80
The Man Who Talked Too Much	WAR	80
Dr. Kildare Comes Home	MGM	80
Sidewalks of London	PAR	79
Too Many Girls	RKO	78
Dr. Kildare's Strange Case	MGM	78
Hit Parade of 1941	REP	78
A Night in the Tropics	UNIV	77
A Chump At Oxford	UA	77
Saturday's Children	WAR	77
The Great Profile	FOX	76
Tugboat Annie Sails Again	WAR	76
Star Dust	FOX	76
He Married His Wife	FOX	76
Dr. Kildare's Crisis	MGM	76
Black Friday	UNIV	75
House of Seven Gables	UNIV	75
Flight Angels	WAR	75
Haunted Honeycomb	MGM	75
The Lady With Red Hair	WAR	74
Black Out	UA	74
Dance, Girl, Dance	RKO	74
Sporting Blood	MGM	74
Two Girls On Broadway	MGM	74
Three Cheers For the Irish	WAR	74
Lennie	FOX	74
A Little Bit of Heaven	UNIV	73
Golden Fleece	MGM	73
Shooting High	FOX	73
Public Deb No. 1	REP	73
Those Were the Days	RKO	73
Viva Cisco Kid	FOX	72
The Mummy's Hand	UNIV	72
Angel From Texas	WAR	71
Hullabaloo	MGM	71
World in Flames	PAR	70
The Quarterback	PAR	70
Saps at Sea	UA	71
Phantom Raiders	MGM	70
Adventure in Diamonds	PAR	69
We Who Are Young	MGM	69
Gemin' Round the Mountain	PAR	68
Villain Still Pursued Her	RKO	68
Money and the Woman	WAR	68
Tear Gas Squad	WAR	68
Music in My Heart	COL	68
I Was An Adventuress	FOX	68
Little Men	RKO	67
Lady in Question	COL	67
Florin	MGM	67
Earthbound	FOX	67
Alias The Deacon	UNIV	66
The Ghost Comes Home	MGM	66
The Way of All Flesh	PAR	65
Bill of Divorcement	RKO	65

Abe Lincoln in Illinois	RKO	72
Over the Moon	UA	70
Queen of Destiny	RKO	65
Forty Little Mothers	MGM	62
Nazi Spy (Re-issue)	WAR	51



RAOUL
WALSH

Directed

Management
SAM JAFFE, INC.

'STRAWBERRY BLONDE'

A WARNER BROS. PICTURE

Box Office

DIGEST

VOLUME 12, NO. 15

54

HOLLYWOOD, CALIF., MARCH 10, 1941

★
The
Only
Authentic
Box
Office
Figures
Published

★

25c

*The Box Office
Reports:*

Fox 'Western Union' Hit of Week

LIBRARY

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ACADEMY OF MOTION PICTURES
ARTS AND SCIENCES

See Page 5

The Box Office
DIGEST "HONOR BOX"

The Biggest Grossing Release Of The Past Week
This Week 20th CENTURY-FOX wins with
'WESTERN UNION' 130%



Vice-Pres. in Charge of Production
DARRYL F. ZANUCK



Associate Producer
HARRY JOE BROWN



Director
FRITZ LANG



ROBERT YOUNG

Screenplay

ROBERT CARSON

Photographers

EDWARD CRONJAGER
ALLEN M. DAVEY

Featured

JOHN CARRADINE
SLIM SUMMERVILLE
CHILL WILLS
BARTON MacLANE
RUSSEL HICKS
VICTOR KILIAN
MINOR WATSON
GEORGE CHANDLER
CHIEF BIG TREE
CHIEF THUNDERCLOUD
DICK RICH
HARRY STRANG
CHARLES MIDDLETON
ADDISON RICHARDS
IRVING BACON



RANDOLPH SCOTT



DEAN JAGGER



VIRGINIA GILMORE

The Box Office DIGEST

The Industry's
Distinctive Weekly

GOOD NEWS

An Editorial by ROBERT E. WELSH

There are technical complications in the operation of the new "five in a block" method of selling pictures which still have some exhibitor groups complaining; there are new cost factors in selling which have distributors buying aspirin.

But we feel, reporting from Hollywood, that the general effect of the new set-up is such as to make it the best news that exhibitors have had for many a season.

For the simple reason that it has producers on their toes as they never have been since the early wide open competitive days of the industry.

Nobody knows just how the method is going to work out, only experience can tell that, but everybody knows that it is going to be tough on the fellow who takes a chance on padding his program with cheaters.

And that is GOOD NEWS to exhibitors.

* * *

Joe Schenk coined the oft-repeated phrase, "There is nothing the matter with this business that good pictures can't cure."

But as often as it has been repeated, and as platitudinous as it may become, it remains a fact.

The occasions when things have got bad in this industry have been those times when things got TOO EASY for the producers.

In our cradle days we were prosperous—but also highly competitive and always worried. The fast-thinker who could make a 750 foot "Battle of Manila" subject and surprise the customers with new thrills, got his reward. The fellow who thought of a "Perils of Pauline" or a "Hazards of Helen" raked the coin in faster than he could count it—same with exhibitors.

The pioneers who broke the ice for feature length pictures with the original Famous Players gambled on their courage, but made their fortunes. And so did the exhibitors.

Then came the pre-1929 days. When the boys went cocky and decided that all this difficult and competitive showmanship could be avoided by buying all the theaters in the country. And forget the exhibitor.

Things had got TOO EASY.

Well, we all know what happened. It can probably be summed up in the statement that Receivers, Trustees, and lawyers got more revenue out of the picture business for a span of years than any group connected with its operation.

Then conditions became TOUGH.

So the men who know the industry, distribution, exhibition, and production, went back to work. Business began to pick up. It picked up too well for the good of the cause.

The sellers discovered that they could hoist percentages on definite hits to unbelievable figures, and still, glory be, they could get rid of the junk by just making enough exhibitors take it by just compelling the exhibitor to buy tripe in order to get the caviar.

As if any picture should ever be conceived, made, and offered to an exhibitor without a sincere belief that it would make money for him. But it was being done.

* * *

The times have changed. We are again back to a period when operations are NOT too easy.

The big boys are worried. Worry is good for them. And for the exhibitor.

You don't have to read between the lines to sense the trend, just read the odds and ends of single columned headlines. Watch the announcements of new associate producer deals that almost every studio is making, as they mend their fences. Notice the frequency of star-director-story deals. And the frequency of announcements of pictures in Technicolor—just to add that extra measure of showmanship insurance.

Not to mention the least—the gradually decreasing number of corn-husky B's, and the increase in the number of moderate budget pictures which the reviewers find themselves describing as B-plus, or near-A's.

All of this sums up to the reason for our cheerful sermon this morning.

* * *

Exhibitors can pay money when they get attractions. Exhibitors wrestle with the wolf when they have to take programs that are like a bottle of milk: An inch of cream at the top, and if you take the cream off, nothing but whitened water beneath.

Hollywood is on its toes right now. It has been forced there. And while we still have to learn our trading lessons in the new method, we can't go far wrong if the manufacturing end is bearing down on BOX OFFICE.

DISTRIBUTORS' BATTING AVERAGE FOR 1940

		%
1. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer	46 Releases	100
2. United Artists	21 Releases	99
3. Twentieth Century-Fox	48 Releases	93
4. Warners-First National	46 Releases	90
5. Paramount	42 Releases	87
6. Universal	50 Releases	78
7. RKO-Radio	48 Releases	78
8. Columbia	41 Releases	75
9. Republic	25 Releases	70
10. Monogram	26 Releases	65

*Does not include "Gone With the Wind," 388%, sold under special contract, and produced by David Selznick.

The Highlighter: **Covers the Picture News Front in a Quick Glance**

Oh well, but no ho hums . . . As the Editorial on the preceding page indicates, things are happening around Hollywood . . . Not those obvious earthquakes that make a spread eagle headline, but the important occurrences that make pictures . . . Deals here, deals there, deals everywhere, as the boys strengthen their fences and add to allure . . . Lubitsch moving to Twentieth after completing his United Artists picture, on a three year deal . . . Claudette Colbert, gosh how the box office loves that gal, also traveling to Westwood as one of Charlie Feldman's packages . . . William Dieterle getting lined up on his big one for RKO and bringing Simone Simon back to the screen . . . Harold Lloyd's first for RKO liked so well that he is talking a new deal, which may combine pictures in which he appears with those he produces . . . David Selznick, now on his own as the Jock Whitney combination is being smoothed out of existence, buying important story properties, which is like the rumble before the storm . . . Zanuck gives Fritz Lang, following "Western Union," a contract calling for exclusive services—and they used to say at MGM that Lang was hard to handle . . . Maybe he just made the mistake of being right too often.

GOSH, LET'S STOP AND CATCH OUR BREATH

Hollywood is bristling with too much action, so suppose we take a pause and see what is happening out in the field . . . Well, the picture business is in one of those cycles which makes money for everybody—except the distributor with a good new attraction to release . . . Holdovers . . . In the key city first runs . . . Which is the red meat of the industry's sustenance, since there is no sorrier feeling than to realize that a picture could have got a tremendously bigger gross if the possibilities had been exhausted on the first runs . . . But at the same time, comes the headache . . . Because holdovers are like a dam that backs up other pictures in eccentric ways . . . It plays the dickens with all the labor you have put into national publicity, and the money into dated national advertising, and it has a possible hit attraction gathering dust on many exchange shelves until the holdovers get out of the way . . . Top current holdovers, according to our reports, are "Strawberry Blonde," "Tobacco Road," "Back Street" and "Western Union" with "So Ends Our Night" and "The Lady Eve" breaking the holdover tape in Eastern spots.

LET'S GO BACK AND LOOK THE STUDIOS OVER

Buddy De Sylva, in the harness as Paramount tops, is looking over the old story properties with ideas towards the future, we are told . . . Gosh, that is one of the

worst headaches of a new production executive . . . Every studio has potential gold mines in material purchased since its earliest days, and every sincere executive tries to do the digging that will bring out the ore . . . But times change, and audience desires . . . All too often a piece of material that would have been big money a few years ago, if properly presented, has been outdated either by a change in taste or because a couple of other studios have stolen its idea in various forms . . . Then there is the problem of stories that were brought for particular stars who were top money attractions at the time of purchase—and who may not be with the company now, or, whisper it, may no longer even be top money stars . . . The best of luck, Buddy, in your prospecting among them thar hills . . . It's a tough life, but you have proven that you can take it, and, if there is none listening just now, we might whisper that your show record also proves that you can get it . . . Let's turn the page . . . It brings up the news that Jack Benny is so hot on the radio that he is forced to run to the desert to get away from the sponsors . . . Which doesn't surprise your Highlighter . . . As long as we have known the show business we have never known a top comedian—and popular singers might be included—whose secret of success was not an evident desire, hoke or no hoke in his material, to SATISFY that customer . . . it's a "something that comes across the footlights, and it can also penetrate the air . . . George M. Cohan always had it . . . You felt that he was sweating his shirt limp to give you the money's worth for the ticket you had bought . . . Sophie Tucker had it . . . Al Jolson, gosh, when he went down on his knees for "Mammy" he wasn't selling the hooey, he was telling the audience, "I'm going the limit to try to make you happy." . . . Bing Crosby, Bob Hope, and Jack Benny—who are among those who can sell it over the ether waves . . . Bob Burns has that ingratiating knack of making you feel that he is giving his all to make YOU happy . . . It's a showman's instinct that many overnight stars who turn nonchalant after a temporary success would do well to cultivate.

UNIVERSAL HOLDS ITS HEAD UP THESE DAYS

That was interesting news telling of the new seven year contracts for the top Universal executives, approved by the company's directors, and prompted by the remarkable recovery from nowhere to a place in the sun that those executives have accomplished . . . It is not so long ago when nobody would give you a plug nickel for your hopes of rescuing the floundering Universal . . . It was surprising news to hear very early that Universal had cut its deficit . . . That was a

near-miracle . . . So there is no word left to describe feelings when recovery turned to profits . . . So a lei of orchids to Nate Blumberg, guiding the destinies of the entire company, and a bountiful share to Cliff Work, who has modestly piloted the studio activities . . . We think we said it before, but we don't mind repeating, Cliff is one of those rarities, a production executive who does not want his picture in the papers . . . Something big will happen if the rumors come true that Mark Hellinger is going to join Zanuck's organization, having departed from Warners . . . There's a team of showmen that should spark together . . . That Barbara Stanwyck gal is about the busiest person in town . . . She has "The Lady Eve" breaking in the key Eastern spots, Capra's "John Doe" coming up for preview this week, and now we hear that Warners are hot on a deal . . . Just received our New York report on "That Night in Rio" at the Roxy and find that in the face of a blizzard that is compared with the fabulous one of 1888—everyone who grew up in New York will tell you what his grandparents said about that blitzsnow—the picture sold to standing room only signs over the week-end . . . There, my friends, is what the picture business needs . . . Attractions that not only pull 'em away from the free radio, but through the blizzards . . . Let's have more like that . . . Arthur Eddy has us all hopped up about the new Louella Parsons air shows, which pick up on the air March 28th . . . Sounds like a knockout, with the program based on adaptations of important new pictures, and the stars who appear in the pictures recreating their screen roles . . . The William Esty Agency is handling the show, which will be heard on the Coast at 7 P.M.

SHORTS COMING BACK INTO THEIR OWN SPOT

This industry was founded on the appeal of a varied show, one reelers to begin with, later two reelers, and even occasionally three reel epics . . . It is worth while to note that most distributors and chain operators have decided that the competitive buying of the new "five-in-a-group" system is very likely to bring the short subject back into the sunlight . . . The boys are figuring that open market buying will get the prices for top A attractions what they deserve, while making it difficult for the exhibitor to pad the bill with a hunk of celluloid in the B minus class . . . With the result, that to get his money back, and to round his bill out for a full evening of entertainment, the exhibitor will do some trading for meritorious shorts . . . And, of course, there are definite limitations in the government ukase against forcing junk shorts on feature deals.

The Box Office: 'Western Union' Runs High in Week of Holdovers

Of 12 New Releases In The Past Week,
3 Ran Over 100%, 2 Came Through
Okay, And 7 Were Very Weak.

FOX—1 Release

Twentieth Century-Fox's only release this week is Darryl F. Zanuck's new Technicolor western epic "WESTERN UNION" which on its opening figures is averaging 130% and consequently is the Honor Box Winner this week.

"WESTERN UNION" has been backed by a terrific exploitation campaign and is already being held over for second and third weeks and promises to be a consistent money-maker for both the studio and the exhibitors.

Randolph Scott and Robert Young are co-starred with Virginia Gilmore, who received such favorable comment for her work in "Tall, Dark and Handsome," as their new leading lady. Dean Jagger ("Brigham Young") heads the big featured cast which include John Carradine, Slim Summerville, Barton MacLane, and numerous others.

Harry Joe Brown acted as associate producer to Darryl Zanuck and Fritz Lang very capably directed this costly western epic.

Needless to say, exhibitors in so-called western theaters as well as in the nabes can expect even stronger business on this one and should arrange for extended playing-time.

MGM—2 Releases

MGM has two new releases, one of which is a box office natural, while the second is a rather weak programmer.

"ANDY HARDY'S PRIVATE SECRETARY," 128%, has only had a few openings but is keeping up the high standard set at the boxoffice by the previous Andy Hardy pictures.

As usual, Mickey Rooney, Lewis Stone and Ann Rutherford head the cast, plus a new addition this time in the person of Kathryn Grayson, MGM's new singing find, whom they hope to develop into another Judy Garland or Deanna Durbin.

12 Releases Not In The Last Issue

		%	Est.
Western Union	PAR	130	125
Andy Hardy's Private Sec'y	MGM	128	135
Virginia	PAR	126	115
So Ends Our Night	UA	96	100
Blondie Goes Latin	COL	81	80
Play Girl	RKO	72	80
Trial of Mary Dugan	MGM	72	80
Petticoat Politics	REP	68	65
Meet the Chump	UNIV	68	70
Arkansas Judge	REP	67	65
Father's Son	WARO	67	65
Chamber of Horrors	MONO	65	65

Others in the featured cast are Fay Holden, Sara Haden and Ian Hunter.

George B. Sietz again directed for the Joe Cohn-Carey Wilson unit.

"ANDY HARDY'S PRIVATE SECRETARY" is much longer (1 hour 40 minutes) than the average picture in this series, exhibitors should book a short second feature with this one to allow for a turn-over.

MGM'S second release is the "TRIAL OF MARY DUGAN" which, years ago, brought stardom to Norma Shearer when it was first produced. However, this time it has been filmed as a "quickie" and is not quite as strong in marquee values, although it may pull up from its present 72% average on future bookings.

Robert Young and Laraine Day are co-starred and the featured cast includes Frieda Inescourt, John Litel and Marsha Hunt. Norman McLeod directed for producer Edward Knopf.

The picture will satisfy but can best be booked as a filler.

PARAMOUNT—1 Release

Paramount's new release this week, the Technicolor special, "VIRGINIA," seems to be a box office natural judging by the first figures received from quite a large number of key cities. "VIRGINIA" is currently averaging 126% and with all the second and third week hold-overs this picture is receiving it looks quite certain that it will hold that figure or go a bit stronger.

Fred MacMurray and Madeleine Carroll are co-starred in this modern story about the old South. Marie Wilson, after a long absence, scores a terrific hit as does also Sterling Hayden, Paramount's new find whom they are grooming for stardom in the near future. Little Caroline Lee, who made such a hit with Mr. MacMurray and Miss Carroll in "Honeymoon in Bali" is also in the "VIRGINIA" featured cast along with Helen Broderick, Paul Hurst and Louise Beavers.

E. H. Griffith both produced and directed

under William LeBaron's supervision as well as collaborating on the original story with Virginia Van Upp.

Exhibitors in all types of houses can expect excellent results on this one.

UNITED ARTISTS—1 Release

United Artists' release this week is "SO ENDS OUR NIGHT" which serves as the first production from the new David Loew-Al Lewin producing unit. This rather heavy anti-Nazi melodrama is rather long and follows the series of previous anti-Nazi pictures which likewise haven't done very well at the box office, with the exception of MGM's "Escape." The first figures received on "SO ENDS OUR NIGHT" have been rather spotty depending a great deal on the location and clientele of each individual exhibitor and to date the picture is only averaging 96% which is not so bad; still on the other hand this was a very costly production with a big cast headed by Fredric March and Margaret Sullavan.

The featured cast includes Francis Dee, Anna Sten, Erich Von Stroheim and Glen Ford, who really carries the lead and received most of the critics' raves.

"SO ENDS OUR NIGHT" was based on Erich Maria Remarque's sensational novel "Flotsam" and John Cromwell directed for producers Loew and Lewin.

Exhibitors had better play safe and book a much lighter feature with this one, preferably a comedy or a musical.

COLUMBIA—Also 1 Release

Columbia's new release is the latest in the Blondie series, "BLONDIE GOES LATIN," which with the addition of music and dancing seems to be the best of the series yet, as the first box office figures show this picture running 82%.

As usual, Penny Singleton, Arthur Lake and Larry Simms are starred, being ably supported by a good featured cast of players headed by Ruth Terry, Jonathan Hale and Tito Guizar, formerly of Paramount. Incidentally, the addition of Tito Guizar to the cast should help this picture considerably in the Central and South American markets.

Producer Bob Sparks and Director Frank Strayer, who handled this series from the beginning are also responsible for this new Blondie.

★ Continued on page 10

6 FEATURES "GOING DOWN"

	Was	Now
Mr. and Mrs. Smith	RKO	123 121
Tall, Dark and Handsome	FOX	90 86
Victory	PAR	87 84
Maisie Was a Lady	MGM	86 83
You're the One	PAR	87 80
Lucky Devils	UNIV	72 70

2 FEATURES "GOING UP"

	Was	Now
Strawberry Blonde	WAR	123 127
High Sierra	WAR	112 114

20'th's 'That Night in Rio' Socko Money Hit

TWENTIETH CENTURY-FOX

The Digest's Box Office Estimate
155%

Associate Producer Fred Kohlmar
Director Irving Cummings
Screenplay George Seaton,
Bess Meredyth, Hal Long
Additional Dialogue by Samuel Hoffenstein
Based on Play by Rudolph Lothar, Hans Adler
Adapted by Jessie Ernst
Stars Alice Faye, Don Ameche,
Carmen Miranda

Featured: S. Z. Sakall, J. Carrol Naish, Curt Bois,
Leonid Kinsky, Carmen Miranda's Orchestra,
Frank Puglia, Lillian Porter, Miria Montez,
Georges Renavent, Edward Conrad, Fortunio
Bonanova, Flores Brothers.

Photographers Leon Shamroy,
Ray Rennahan

Time 90 Minutes

Zanuck put everything into this one—from soup to nuts; from flashy table decorations of Technicolor at its showiest, through the appetizers of sex and beauty, on to the delicious salads of music, and wrapped it up in that rarity—an intelligent musical comedy story.

It is our considered opinion, even under a bit of fresh enthusiasm since this review is being written fifteen minutes after viewing the picture, that present ticket-buyers desires will make it the top Twentieth money picture of the year, and will challenge most that will come along before New Year's Eve, 1941.

We have used the trite word "everything" in describing its show angles. Well, it may be an obvious word, but it tells the whole story. Three of the top musical folk of the screen are headlined: Don Ameche, Alice Faye, and Carmen Miranda. They are backed up with lyrics and music that really sock the ear. Behind those two factors you can start listing the other assets, and not state them all in a single breath.

Let's try:

Irving Cummings has so many money pictures on his record that we hesitate to hint at comparisons, but it is our feeling that this time he topped them all. Use of "business" that keeps chuckles constant, timing of gag situations that milks them to the utmost, backgrounding with the utmost in visual effect, summed into a picture that will go into the Cummings memory book.

And then the Technicolor. In keeping with the subject, it is showmanlike on the musical side, with deference to a South American theme. Reds are red, blues are blue, and greens are green. The effect—which, of course, might not have been so good for a dramatic subject—in this case is dazzling and cheering. You really have the feeling that you are looking at a \$4.40 per ducat New York stage show.

Then there is the item of script and dialogue. Honest to goodness, between script-

ers, directors and players, they play it out without a bad line, or a stalling moment. And that is something to do when you combine farce with music.

About this time we should probably tell you something about the subject matter of the picture. Well, its structure is strictly musical in order to get under way, and it has no trouble rolling with the luscious Carmen Miranda socking home with hips and hooray an opening number, then when plot develops it becomes sex farce. With all the pleasurable spice of sex farce, but without the rough edges.

We have met Carmen in the opening flash, and along with her a hundred and one dancers, etc., and then arrives Don Ameche—his picture name is Larry Martin—apparently the male star of the Rio show. Don has been lassoed, and haltered, by Carmen, but she still has Latin jealousy in her heart whenever he smiles at another pretty woman. "Jealousy" is a mild word for her tantrums.

Well, it happens, plausibly premised and believable, that Ameche must double for the local Casanova, a Baron married to Alice Faye. And she loves her baron. Which brings on all sorts of fast-thinking maneuvers, complications including stock exchanges and bedrooms, before all ends happily for all concerned. And that includes two Don Ameche's—the American entertainer and the baron.

It is definitely the sort of material in which Don Ameche can go to town any day in the week, and will register solidly with his following. Alice Faye—gosh, what a beauty that gal is in Technicolor—comes through like a million. Surprise of the picture is Carmen Miranda. No one needs to be reminded that Carmen is an eyeful—standing still or in motion—but this time she plays an acting part, alternating excitable Portuguese with acceptable English, and just wrapping you up when she is selling a song. The South American star is definitely set, after this picture, as a ranking money bet for picture marquees.

Not the least of the picture's virtues is in the ace high supporting cast assembled by Zanuck and his associate producer, Fred Kohlmar, S. Z. Sakall the round-faced fluttery character whom you have seen in

Current Reviews

		We Est.
That Night in Rio	FOX	155
Rage in Heaven	MGM	80
Double Date	UNIV	75
Murder Among Friends	FOX	75
Lone Wolf Takes a Chance	COL	70
Trail of the Silver Spurs	MONO	60

so many pictures of late, turns in a corking performance. J. Carrol Naish goes Latin for the occasion, and makes his role stand out. Curt Bois, whom you may remember from "Golden Boy," does a walloping eccentric. Then, there is reliable Leonid Kinsky.

You can well imagine that music played an important part in the general strength of such a picture, and Alfred Newman did not let Twentieth down. It is a fine job. Carmen Miranda's own orchestra, billed that way—"Carmen Miranda's Orchestra"—gives the Latin background that holds the tempo of many scenes.

Mack Gordon and Harry Warren get the credits on the music and lyrics, and it is in our opinion the most delightful ASCAP contribution to the screen that we have heard in a long time. You will be buying the records.

Camera honors, for a rather unusual job in its musical comedy effects, are shared by Leon Shamroy and Ray Rennahan. And when you see the picture you will realize why we cannot wind up without a word for the Art Direction of Richard Day, Joseph C. Wright; the set decorations by Thomas Little; the gol-durndest most enticing costumes the screen has seen in many a moon, by Travis Banton. Hermes Pan gets the orchids for the swell dance numbers.

Fred Kohlmar, just a freshman in the Twentieth College, after his many years at other studios, has added a bold-faced credit to his list.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: A whale of a show. Will top "Tin Pan Alley," because of all the added factors. Previewed March 6th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "If rave reviews are of material aid in selling a picture—a premise fondly believed by the professional critical fraternity—"That Night in Rio" will be high on the list of the season's ranking money-makers."

VARIETY: "Everything even the most captious may demand of a musical is delightfully blended in this high-roof combination. 'Night in Rio' has inciting rhythm and music, pretty girls, comedy romance stepped up to a high pink pitch, brilliant clowning, lavish production, including a stunning parade of fashions deftly woven into the narrative, and Technicolor pictorial beauty never excelled. All in all, it gets 20th-Fox off again on the van of 1941-42 filmusicals, with an entry setting a fast pace and headed for big and well deserved coin."

'Rage in Heaven' Depressing Morbid Yarn

MGM

The Digest's Box Office Estimate
80%

Producer Gottfried Reinhardt
Director W. S. Van Dyke
Screenplay Christopher Isherwood, Robert Thoren
Original Novel James Hilton
Stars Robert Montgomery, Ingrid Bergman
Featured: George Sanders, Luvile Watson, Oscar Homolka, Philip Merivale, Matthew Boulton, Aubrey Mather, Fredric Worlock, Francis Compton, Gilbert Emery, Ludwig Hart.
Photographer Olivier T. Marsh
Time 82 Minutes

Robert Montgomery is one of the most personable stars on the MGM roster, and, what is more important, he is tops as an actor. Just why MGM—with the possible connivance of Montgomery—has decided to lose no opportunity to kill him off at the box office is one of those mysteries of life.

"Rage in Heaven" starts off with a title so bad that it could be called "premeditated murder," and when the celluloid unwinds

you find the crime has been committed. It isn't good horror stuff, because it isn't frankly Karloff-Lugosi all-out horror. It is just psychopathic.

You, Mr. Exhibitor, are asked to entice entertainment seeking ticket buyers with eighty minutes of insanity. Probing into a diseased mind. Montgomery is the chap who is ill, his obsession is the unfounded idea that Ingrid Bergman, his wife, and George Sanders, his best friend, are still in love with each other. This leads, through many tortuous moments to a climax in which Montgomery plans his own suicide so as to throw guilt of murder on Sanders.

Just to give it to exhibitors in quick flashes: The action opens on an insane asylum . . . Montgomery actually kills a kitten . . . don't squirm . . . it allows the star to die, thus removing him from the picture, long, long before the end title is flashed. So, it can be said, they have Montgomery kill

a kitten, then kill himself. And you can underline that last word.

Oscar Homolka, not very prominent in the action, gives the picture what sane moments it has. It won't help Ingrid Bergman.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: Strictly for the psychopaths, if you have enough of such customers. Previewed March 4th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "Rage in Heaven" presents a difficult sales problem. Exhibitors who concentrate solely on 'horror' angles will not be doing the attraction full justice. It is equally an appealing, off-center love story. Critics will draw comparisons with 'Night Must Fall' and it is not unlike 'We Are Not Alone,' a previous Hilton novel that fared badly at the film box offices."

VARIETY: "Tragic drama of a peculiarly sombre pattern, this is not what the average picture patron calls entertainment. It deals with neurotic jealousy and a psychiatric study of paranoic insanit" played with dreadful conviction by Robert Montgomery in a role remindful of that other oblique masterpiece of his, Metro's 'Night Must Fall.'"

'Double Date' Gets Its Slapstick Laughs

UNIVERSAL

The Digest's Box Office Estimate
75%

Associate Producer Joseph G. Stanford
Director Glenn Tryon
Screenplay Scott Darling, Erna Lazarus, Agnes Christine Johnston.
Original Scott Darling, Erna Lazarus
Stars Edmund Lowe, Una Merkel
Featured: Peggy Moran, Rand Brooks, Tommy Kelly, Hattie Noel, Eddy Waller.
Photographer John Boyle
Art Director Jack Otterson
Time 59 Minutes

"Double Date" goes enthusiastically for the good old motto: "Make 'em laugh, and don't give a darn how you do it—so long as they laugh." As a result it sums up as an entertaining modest budget picture, not too strong because the story basis provided was

none too hot, but pretty certain to give satisfaction in its classification.

Glenn Tryon directed, and he must have pump-primed his script to get the laughs. All the tricks of timing that he used to know so well when he was a pretty popular comedian himself are in evidence. And it is not imaginative to figure that many of the laughs—and some of the situations get the loud kind—came out of the cooperation between director and players, and may be a surprise to the script.

The story presents Peggy Moran and Rand Brooks, adolescent sweethearts, with a problem on their hands. This is to keep Edmund Lowe, his father, from marrying her aunt, Una Merkel. The kids just don't think the elders can be trusted to handle their own affairs.

The cast is excellent, and its experienced

personnel helps to smooth out a number of rough corners. Una Merkel, who should be seen more often, clicked with this reviewer.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: A good family audience bet in its proper spot on the bills. Previewed March 6th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "Undistinguished as the yarn is, it manages to come off as pretty fair entertainment through Tryon's presentation and the careful production of Joseph G. Sanford."

VARIETY: "What happens when two young people try to break up the romance of a middle-aged couple results in Universal having another nifty program offering. Production, direction writing and casting make no pretense at grandeur and consequently bring home the bacon in a light, breezy manner that will satisfy the paying customers while they await the more elegant first features."

'Murder Among Friends' Fine Job in 'B' Class

20th CENTURY-FOX

The Digest's Box Office Estimate
75%

Associate Producers Ralph Dietrich, Walter Morosco
Director Ray McCarey
Original Screenplay John Larkin
Stars Marjorie Weaver, John Hubbard
Featured: Cobina Wright, Jr., Mona Barrie, Douglas Dumbrille, Sidney Blackmer, Lucien Littlefield, Truman Bradley, Bill Halligan, Eddie Conrad.
Photographer Charles Clarke
Time 67 Minutes

This new trick of kidding the murder mysteries is bringing up some very good entertainment from the B-plus ranks, and "Murder Among Friends" will take rank with the best of the current crop, while suffering from a lack of marquee names.

The original screenplay by John Larkin, and direction by Ray McCarey place all the

emphasis on getting laughs, after providing themselves with a fairly plausible premise. Murders happen wholesale, but as the title says, it is all "murder among friends." You take them seriously enough to get the momentary thrill, but you really are waiting for the laugh that comes at every twist and turn.

Premise of the story is the idea of a group of men taking out a joint insurance policy which will pay a fortune to the survivor, or survivors, in twenty years. Your imagination can tell you the possibilities that can follow from such a premise when the friendly joint holders start exiting from life until only a few are left to suspect.

It's a corking script job, brought to the screen in adept fashion by young Ray McCarey, who uses all of his experience in comedy ranks to time each line and situation.

The cast turns in a neat job, with Marjorie Weaver and John Hubbard giving personable performance as the amateurs who are on the trail of the guilty one. Support is capable, with Eddie Conrad contributing an especially good comedy bit.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: Neat little package of fun. Previewed March 4th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "A particularly bright and amusing little comedy-mystery is 'Murder Among Friends,' and, having been given excellent production by Ralph Dietrich and Walter Morosco, it looks like a million instead of a budget picture, which means it will go into theatres as the bottom half of a dual and, in all likelihood, give more genuine satisfaction than some of the \$2,000,000 films it will be hooked up with."

VARIETY: "A snappy whodunit that never veers from its entertainment course, 'Murder Among Friends' adds up to worthy double bill fare on every count."

THE HONOR BOX WINNER

Robert Young

'Western Union'



THE HONOR BOX WINNER

Randolph Scott

'Western Union'



Fox Clicks With 'Western Union'---Week's Best

★ Continued from page 5

RKO—1 Release

RKO-Radio's new release this week is an exceptionally clever little B picture, "PLAY GIRL," 72%, that isn't going over very strongly, probably on account of the lack of marquee names—Kay Francis and Jimmy Ellison are co-starred. Kay Francis has been dead at the box office for the past two or three years, even before her Warner Bros. contract ended. Jimmy Ellison, since leaving the Hopalong Cassidy series, has had some very good leads but has never been backed up with sufficient publicity and thus his name is not particularly strong at the box office.

The supporting cast includes Mildred Coles, Nigel Bruce and Kane Richmond.

Frank Woodruff directed and Cliff Reid produced for the Lee Marcus program unit.

REPUBLIC—2 Releases

Republic has two new programmers this week, neither of special importance, but both of which will make satisfactory fillers.

The best of these is "PETTICOAT POLITICS" which is the latest in the Higgins Family series. However, this time the Gleason family has been eliminated and has been substituted by Roscoe Karns, Ruth Donnelly and Polly Moran.

Erle Kenton directed for Producer Robert North.

Republic's second release is another of the Weaver Brothers and Elviry series, the "ARKANSAS JUDGE," 68%. This one

is better than most of the series and will make a good filler especially in the sticks and

BRIEF REVIEWS

"THE TRAIL OF THE SILVER SPURS" (Weeks-Monogram)

Another chapter in the adventure of the Range Busters, and one that maintains the satisfactory entertainment pace of this group of low budget action pictures. Has all the formula Western elements, and also benefits by some good range warbling from John King. If preview reactions in Hollywood are any criterion this George Weeks series released through Monogram should be a good buy in its price class. The story this time uses a ghost town of the West for its background, a robbery of the Denver mint for its plot premise, the Range Busters as United States undercover marshals, and all their talents to mix the action with the laughs.

"LONE WOLF TAKES A CHANCE" (Columbia)

They are letting this series get down into the strictly quickie class. On that basis "Lone Wolf Takes a Chance" gets by, provided you don't pay too much, and use it for its proper spot on the bill. Some good comedy by Eric Blore saves the show, which otherwise is just one of those things you find written on cuffs . . . We'd hate to try to tell you the story—it's something like a fifteen reel serial.

tank towns where these radio favorites have their biggest following.

Frank MacDonald directed and Armand Schaefer produced.

UNIVERSAL—1 Release

Universal's new release is a new Hugh Herbert comedy, "MEET THE CHUMP," 68%. This feature will make a good light filler with a heavy melodrama such as "So Ends Our Night"; but don't book it with Hal Roach's "Road Show", which was released the same week, because of the similarity of plot. Lewis Howard, Jane Kelly and Anne Nagel are featured. Edward Cline directed and Ken Goldsmith produced.

WARNERS—1 Release

Warners-First National's only new release is another programmer from the Bryan Foy unit, "FATHER'S SON," 67%. This one has no particular first run value but will get by okay in the nabes, particularly for a Friday-Saturday booking as it was a Booth Tarkington story and his stories have an appeal for the family trade.

John Litel and Freida Inescourt are featured. Ross Lederman directed and William Jacobs supervised.

MONOGRAM—1 Release

Monogram's only new release is an English importation, "CHAMBER OF HORRORS," 65%, starring Leslie Banks. If you have one of those houses where they liked "Dracula" and "Frankenstein," book this one as your second feature; otherwise leave it on the shelf.

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MAY 15	4. HAGGIN STAKES	May 24	2-Year-Olds, Calif. Bred	5 Furlongs & a Half	10,000

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May 24	6. WILL ROGERS HANDICAP	May 31	3-Year-Olds	7 Furlongs	10,000
May 31	7. GOLDEN STATE BREEDERS HANDICAP	June 7	3-Year-Olds and Up, Calif. Bred	1 Mile & a Sixteenth	10,000
June 7	8. SEQUOIA HANDICAP	June 14	Fillies and Mares, 3 Yrs. and Up	7 Furlongs	10,000
June 14	9. INGLEWOOD HANDICAP	June 21	3-Year-Olds and Upward	1 Mile & a Sixteenth	10,000
June 21	10. VANTY HANDICAP	June 28	Fillies and Mares, 3 Yrs. and Up	1 Mile & a Sixteenth	10,000
June 28	11. AMERICAN HANDICAP	July 4	3-Year-Olds and Upward	1 Mile and a Furlong	20,000
June 28	12. STARLET STAKES	July 5	2-Year-Olds	6 Furlongs	10,000
July 19	13. SUNSET HANDICAP	July 26	3-Year-Olds and Upward	1 Mile and 5 Furlongs	25,000

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All Major Features Released in 1940

A

OVER \$500,000

Gone With the Wind	MGM	388
Boom Town	MGM	232
North West Mounted Police	PAR	202
The Dictator	UA	184
Philadelphia Story	MGM	181
Grapes of Wrath	FOX	178
Rebecca	UA	170
Strike Up the Band	MGM	161
Northwest Passage	MGM	154
The Fighting 69th	WAR	153
Sea Hawk	WAR	151
Tin Pan Alley	FOX	150
Santa Fe Trail	WAR	144
My Favorite Wife	RKO	143
Virginia City	WAR	142
Road To Singapore	PAR	141
I Love You Again	MGM	141
All This and Heaven Too	WAR	140
Comrade X	MGM	139
Love Thy Neighbor	PAR	139
Mark of Zorro	FOX	138
It's A Date	UNIV	137
Knute Rockne	WAR	136
New Moon	MGM	135
Lillian Russell	FOX	133
Strange Cargo	MGM	131
Escape	MGM	130
Pinocchio	RKO	130
Down Argentine Way	FOX	130
The Letter	WAR	128
Buck Benny Rides Again	PAR	127
His Girl Friday	COL	126
The Ghost Breakers	PAR	124
Thief of Bagdad	UA	124
They Drive by Night	WAR	123
Johnny Apollo	FOX	122
Arise My Love	PAR	121
Rhythm on the River	PAR	121
Pride and Prejudice	MGM	121
Foreign Correspondent	UA	121
Swanee River	FOX	119
City of Conquest	WAR	119
Third Finger Left Hand	MGM	118
Bitter Sweet	MGM	117
The Westerner	UA	117
Torrid Zone	WAR	116
Waterloo Bridge	MGM	116
Spring Parade	UNIV	115
No Time for Comedy	WAR	115
Broadway Melody of 1940	MGM	115
Arizona	COL	114
Young Tom Edison	MGM	113
Edison The Man	MGM	113
Chad Hanna	FOX	112
Lucky Partners	RKO	112
Primrose Path	PAR	112
My Little Chickadee	UNIV	112
Maryland	FOX	111
Mortal Storm	MGM	111
My Son, My Son	UA	109
Irene	RKO	108
Too Many Husbands	COL	108
Return of Frank James	FOX	107
Second Chorus	PAR	107
South of Pago Pago	UA	106
Boys from Syracuse	UNIV	106
Susan and God	MGM	105
Howards of Virginia	COL	105
Tynoon	PAR	103
Little Old New York	FOX	103
Swiss Family Robinson	RKO	103
You'll Find Out	RKO	102
I Take This Woman	MGM	102

B

FROM \$200,000 TO \$500,000

Andy Hardy Meets a Debutante	MGM	143
He Stayed for Breakfast	COL	113
Unlured Wife	UNIV	113
Brother Orchid	WAR	101
Doctor Takes A Wife	COL	102
Dr. Ehrlich's Magic Bullet	WAR	101
Wyoming	MGM	101
My Love Came Back	WAR	96
Four Mothers	WAR	92
Moon Over Burma	PAR	90

C

FROM \$100,000 TO \$200,000

Ranlarts We Watch	RKO	92
Night Train	FOX	81
The Farmer's Daughter	PAR	80
Mexican Spitfire Out West	RKO	80
Melody Ranch	REP	78
Blondie Has Servant Trouble	COL	76
Wagons Westward	REP	76
The Marines Fly High	RKO	75
A Child Is Born	WAR	75
Blondie on a Budget	COL	75
Blondie Plays Cupid	COL	75
East of the River	WAR	75
Charlie Chan in Panama	FOX	74
Fugitive from a Prison Camp	COL	74
River's End	WAR	73
Gross Country Romance	RKO	73
Twenty-one Days Together	COL	73
Sandy Is a Lady	UNIV	73
Anne of Windy Poplars	RKO	73
Three Faces West	REP	73
Scatterbrain	REP	73
Girl From God's Country	REP	73
Sandy Gets Her Man	UNIV	73
Leatherpushers	UNIV	72
Cherokee Strip	PAR	72
Men Against the Sky	RKO	72
Man Who Wouldn't Talk	FOX	72
Danger On Wheels	UNIV	72
Gambling on the High Seas	WAR	72
Ladies Must Live	WAR	72
Son of Karanga	UNIV	72
Gay Caballero	FOX	71
Murder Over New York	FOX	72
Margie	UNIV	72
Lone Wolf Keeps a Date	COL	71
Diamond Frontier	UNIV	71

D

BELOW \$100,000

The Great Victor Herbert	PAR	101
If I Had My Way	UNIV	100
Brigham Young	FOX	100
Go West	MGM	97
Turnabout	UA	96
Shop Around the Corner	MGM	95
Remember the Night	PAR	95
When the Daltons Rode	UNIV	94
Little Nellie Kelly	MGM	94
Green Hell	UNIV	93
House Across the Bay	UA	93
Long Voyage Home	UA	92
Four Sons	FOX	92
1,000,000 B. C.	UA	92
They Knew What They Wanted	RKO	90
21 Mile Team	MGM	90
No, No, Nanette	RKO	88
Vigil in the Night	RKO	88
Seven Sinners	UNIV	88
Captain Caution	UA	88
The Light That Failed	PAR	88
The Earl of Chicago	MGM	88
Our Town	UA	87
A Dispatch From Reuters	WAR	87
Safari	PAR	85
Kit Carson	UA	84
Pastor Hall	UA	83
Dark Command	REP	82
Rangers of Fortune	PAR	81
Young People	FOX	81
Dr. Cyclops	PAR	81
Bluebird	FOX	80
Ahe Lincoln in Illinois	RKO	72
Over the Moon	UA	70
Queen of Destiny	RKO	65
Forty Little Mothers	MGM	62
Nazi Spy (Re-issue)	WAR	51

La Conga Nights	UNIV	71
Dr. Christian Meets the Women	RKO	71
Courageous Dr. Christian	RKO	71
All Women Have Secrets	PAR	71
As Young As You Feel	FOX	71
Honey Moon Deferred	UNIV	71
Granny Get Your Gun	WAR	71
City of Chance	FOX	71
Lucky Cisco Kid	FOX	71
Sky Murder	MGM	71
Girls Under 21	COL	71
Devil's Pipeline	UNIV	71
San Francisco Docks	UNIV	70
Kennedy for Riches	RKO	70
Youth Will Be Served	FOX	70
The Great Plane Robbery	COL	70
Charter Pilot	FOX	70
I'm Nobody's Baby Now	UNIV	70
Private Affairs	UNIV	70
I Married Adventure	COL	70
Millionaires in Prison	RKO	70
Half a Sinner	UNIV	70
Saint's Double Trouble	RKO	70
Philo Vance Comes Back	WAR	70
Black Diamonds	UNIV	70
Millionaire Playboy	RKO	70
Queen of the Mob	PAR	70
Wild Cat Bus	RKO	70
Calling All Husbands	WAR	70
Slightly Tempted	UNIV	70
Charlie Chan in the Wax Museum	FOX	70
Meet The Wildcat	UNIV	70
So You Won't Talk	COL	70
Gallant Sons	MGM	70
The Captain Is a Lady	MGM	69
Mexican Spitfire	RKO	69
French Without Tears	PAR	69
Parole Fixer	PAR	69
Hot Steel	UNIV	69
Five Little Peppers Out West	COL	69
You're Not So Tough	UNIV	69
Sailor's Lady	FOX	69
Give Us Wings	UNIV	68
Double Alibi	UNIV	68
Charlie Chan's Murder Cruise	FOX	68
The Saint Takes Over	RKO	68
On Their Own	FOX	68
Free, Blonde and 21	FOX	68
British Intelligence	WAR	68
Calling Philo Vance	WAR	68
Mad Empress	WAR	68
Men Without Souls	COL	68
I Can't Give You Anything But Love	UNIV	68
Mystery Sea Raider	UNIV	68
Before I Hang on a Dime	COL	68
Dancing on a Dime	PAR	67
Beyond Tomorrow	RKO	67
Ma, He's Making Eyes at Me	UNIV	67
Lone Wolf Meets a Lady	COL	67
Women Without Names	PAR	67
Pier 13	FOX	67
Glamour for Sale	COL	67
A Night at Earl Carroll's	PAR	67
L'il Abner	RKO	67
She Couldn't Say No	WAR	67
Stranger on the Third Floor	RKO	67
Dreaming Out Loud	RKO	66
Escape to Paradise	RKO	66
Pop Always Pays	RKO	66
Zanzibar	UNIV	66
King of the Lumberjacks	WAR	66
Girl in 313	FOX	66
Murder in the Air	WAR	66
Manhattan Heartbeat	FOX	66
Love, Honor and Oh Baby	UNIV	66
You Can't Fool Your Wife	RKO	66
Girl from Avenue A	FOX	66
One Crowded Night	RKO	66
Golden Gloves	PAR	66
Street of Memories	FOX	66
Always a Bride	WAR	65
Isle of Destiny	RKO	65
Enemy Agent	UNIV	65
Opened by Mistake	PAR	65
The Fugitive	UNIV	65
Ski Patrol	UNIV	64
And One Was Beautiful	MGM	64
Laddie	RKO	63
Curtain Call	RKO	63
Fugitive From Justice	WAR	63
They Came By Night	GB	62
Women in the War	REP	62
So This Is London	FOX	61
Biscuit Eater	PAR	61

Seventeen	PAR	88
Til We Meet Again	WAR	88
Congo Maisie	MGM	88
It All Came True	WAR	87
The Great McGinty	PAR	86
The Lion Has Wings	UNIV	84
Invisible Man Returns	WAR	84
Castle on the Hudson	UNIV	84
Bank Dick	UNIV	83
Argentine Nights	UNIV	83
Trail of the Vigilantes	UNIV	83
Escape to Glory	COL	83
Gold Rush Maisie	MGM	82
Untamed	PAR	82
Brother Rat and a Baby	WAR	82
Nan From Dakota	MGM	82
Xmas in July	PAR	81
Dulcy	MGM	81
I Want a Divorce	PAR	81
South of Suz	WAR	80
Flowing Gold	WAR	80
Angels Over Broadway	COL	80
The Man I Married	FOX	80
Slightly Honorable	UA	80
The Man Who Talked Too Much	WAR	80
Dr. Kildare Comes Home	MGM	80
Sidewalks of London	PAR	79
Too Many Girls	RKO	78
Dr. Kildare's Strange Case	MGM	78
Hit Parade of 1941	REP	78
A Night in the Tropics	UNIV	77
A Chump At Oxford	UA	77
Saturday's Children	WAR	77
The Great Profile	FOX	76
Tugboat Annie Sails Again	WAR	76
Star Dust	FOX	76
He Married His Wife	FOX	76
Dr. Kildare's Crisis	MGM	76
Black Friday	UNIV	75
House of Seven Gables	UNIV	75
Right Angels	WAR	75
Haunted House	MGM	75
The Lady With Red Hair	WAR	74
Black Cat	UA	74
Dance, Girl, Dance	RKO	74
Sporting Blood	MGM	74
Two Girls On Broadway	MGM	74
Three Cheers For the Irish	WAR	74
Jennie	FOX	74
A Little Bit of Heaven	UNIV	73
Golden Pleading	MGM	73
Shooting High	FOX	73
Public Deb No. 1	FOX	73
Those Were the Days	RKO	73
Tom Brown's School Days	PAR	72
Viva Cisco Kid	FOX	72
The Mummy's Hand	UNIV	72
Angel From Texas	WAR	71
Hullabaloo	MGM	71
World in Flames	PAR	70
The Quarterback	PAR	70
Saps at Sea	UA	71
Phantom Raiders	MGM	70
Adventure in Diamonds	PAR	69
We Who Are Young	MGM	69
Crim Round the Mountain	PAR	68
Villain Still Pursued Her	RKO	68
Money and the Woman	WAR	68
Tear Gas Squad	WAR	68
Music in My Heart	COL	68
I Was An Adventurer	FOX	68
Little Men	RKO	67
Lady in Question	COL	67
Florian	MGM	67
Earthbound	FOX	67
Alias The Deacon	UNIV	66
The Ghost Comes Home	MGM	66
The Way of All Flesh	PAR	65
Bill of Divorcement	RKO	65

Five Little Peppers at Home	COL	72
Queen of the Yukon	MONO	72
Married and in Love	RKO	71
Oh, Johnny	UNIV	71
Gangs of Chicago	REP	71
Behind the News	REP	70
The Ape	MONO	70
Moonlight and Melody	REP	70
Lone Wolf Strikes	COL	70
Emergency Squad	PAR	70
Village Barn Dance	REP	70
The Human Monster	MONO	70
Wolf of New York	REP	69
Who Is Gully	MONO	68
Grand Ole Opry	REP	68
Outside the 3 Mile Limit	COL	68
Son of the Navy	MONO	68
The Phantom Strikes	COL	68
The Fatal Hour	MONO	68
Two Thoroughbreds	RKO	68
Framed	UNIV	68
Girls of the Road	COL	67
Girl From Havana	REP	67
In Old Missouri	REP	67
Cooked Road	REP	67
Little Orvie	RKO	67
Hidden Enemy	MONO	67
You Shall Not Kill	REP	67
My Son Is Guilty	COL	67
Sing, Dance, Plenty Hot	REP	67
Dark Streets of Cairo	UNIV	67
Friendly Neighbors	REP	66
That Gang of Mine	MONO	66
Mad Men of Europe	COL	66
Convicted Woman	COL	66
Midnight Limited	MONO	66
Grandpa Goes To Town	REP	66
Who Killed Aunt Maggie	REP	66
Passport to Alcatraz	COL	66
Murder on the Yukon	MONO	66
Haunted House	MONO	66
Island of Doomed Men	COL	65
The Man With Nine Lives	COL	65
Earl of Puddleston	REP	65
Military Academy	COL	65
Nobody's Children	COL	65
Forgotten Girls	REP	64
Secret Seven	COL	64
Last Alarm	MONO	63
East Side Kids	MONO	63
Boys of the City	MONO	63
Doomed to Die	MONO	63
Peppers in Trouble	COL	63
Up In The Air	MONO	63
I'm Still Alive	RKO	63
Meet the Misses	REP	63
The Danger Flight	MONO	62
On The Spot	MONO	62
Trailing Double Trouble	MONO	62
Laughing at Danger	MONO	62
Miracle on Main Street	COL	61
Tornado Raider	MONO	61
Rabies for Sale	COL	61
Drums of the Desert	MONO	60
Mysterious Mr. Reeder	MONO	59
Tomboy	MONO	58
The Secret Four	MONO	58



THE BATTING AVERAGES

1941

Producers and Associate Producers

	Pictures	%
* Joseph Mankiewicz	1	181
David Hempstead	1	143
William Perlberg	1	130
Harry Joe Brown	1	130
Bruce Manning	1	128
William Cagney	1	127
Mark Hellinger	1	114
Kenneth Macgowan	1	109
R. A. Rowland	1	101
J. Walter Ruben	2	100

Producer-Directors

	Pictures	%
E. H. Griffith	1	126
Clarence Brown	1	107

Actresses

	Pictures	%
Ginger Rogers	1	143
Rosalind Russell	1	130
Olivia de Havilland	1	127
Madeleine Carroll	1	126
Carole Lombard	1	121
Ida Lupino	1	114
Margaret Sullivan	2	112
Hedy Lamarr	1	107
Martha Scott	1	101

Directors

	Pictures	%
George Cukor	1	181
Sam Wood	1	143
Al Hall	1	130
Fritz Lang	1	130
Robert Stevenson	1	128
George B. Seitz	1	128
Raoul Walsh	2	121
Alfred Hitchcock	1	121
Frank Borzage	1	115
Irving Pichel	1	109
Tay Garnett	1	101

Actors

	Pictures	%
Cary Grant	1	181
James Stewart	2	144
Randolph Scott	1	130
Mickey Rooney	1	128
Charles Boyer	1	128
James Cagney	1	127
Fred MacMurray	1	126
Robert Montgomery	1	121
Robert Taylor	1	115
Humphrey Bogart	1	114
Paul Muni	1	109
Robert Young	2	101

All Major Features Released in 1941

Philadelphia Story	MGM	181
Kitty Foyle	RKO	143
Western Union	FOX	130
This Thing Called Love	COL	130
Andy Hardy's Private Secretary	MGM	128
Back Street	UNIV	128
Strawberry Blonde	WAR	127
Virginia	PAR	126
Mr. and Mrs. Smith	RKO	121
Flight Command	MGM	115
High Sierra	WAR	114
Hudson's Bay	FOX	109
Come Live With Me	MGM	107
Cheers for Miss Bishop	UA	105
So Ends Our Night	UA	96
Son of Monte Cristo	UA	95

Tall Dark and Handsome	FOX	86
Buck Privates	UNIV	86
Victory	PAR	84
Maisie Was a Lady	MGM	83
Mad Doctor	PAR	81
Blondie Goes Latin	COL	81
You're the One	PAR	80
Three on a Honeymoon	WAR	80
Ellery Queen, Master Detective	COL	80
Six Lessons from Madame LaZonga	UNIV	80
Flight from Destiny	WAR	80
Texas Rangers Ride Again	PAR	78
Invisible Woman	UNIV	78
Road Show	UA	76
Life With Henry	PAR	75
Romance of the Rio Grande	FOX	73
Girl in the News	FOX	73
Phantom Submarine	COL	72
Golden Hoofs	FOX	72
Play Girl	RKO	72
Trial of Mary Dugan	MGM	72
Keeping Company	MGM	71
Ride, Kelly, Ride	FOX	71

Lucky Devils	UNIV	70
Where Did You Get That Girl	UNIV	70
Convoy	RKO	70
She Couldn't Say No	WAR	70
Michael Shayne, Private Detective	FOX	70
Let's Make Music	RKO	70
Land of Liberty	MGM	70
The Case of the Black Parrot	WAR	70
Devil's Command	COL	70
Barney Follies	REP	69
Bowery Boy	REP	68
Petticoat Politics	REP	68
Meet the Chump	UNIV	68
Saint in Palm Springs	RKO	67
Phantom of Chinatown	MONO	67
Arkansas Judge	REP	67
Father's Son	WAR	67
Her First Romance	MONO	66
Pride of the Bowery	MONO	63
Chamber of Horrors	MONO	65
The Old Swimming Hole	MONO	60



MARJORIE RAMBEAU

as

'Sister Bessie'

Management
BILL WOOLFENDEN, Inc.
Agency

"TOBACCO ROAD"

A TWENTIETH CENTURY - FOX PICTURE



Howard Barnes, first string critic of The New York Herald Tribune, who writes this appraisal of all the merits of TOBACCO ROAD, is recognized as one of the finest critics of the cinema in this country.

It is interesting to note that Mr. Barnes has maintained not only a high artistic standard which is reflected in all his writing in The Herald Tribune, but has been most accurate in estimating the boxoffice interest of motion Pictures. He follows well in the tradition of The Herald Tribune, which has just recently led in Variety's box score for dramatic critics.

We reproduce Mr. Barnes' review of TOBACCO ROAD in its entirety not only because of its importance and interest to the industry, but because we believe it so truthfully represents the sincere effort that went into the making of the year's most anticipated motion picture.



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ON THE SCREEN

By HOWARD BARNES

"Tobacco Road"—Roxy

"TOBACCO ROAD," a screen drama by Nunnally Johnson, adapted from the stage play by Jack Kirkland which was based on the novel by Erskine Caldwell, produced by Darryl F. Zanuck, directed by John Ford and presented by Twentieth Century-Fox at the Roxy Theater with the following cast:

Jeeter	Charley Grapewin
Sister Bessie	Marjorie Rambeau
Ellie May	Gene Tierney
Dude Lester	William Tracy
Ada Lester	Elizabeth Patterson
Dr. Tim	Dana Andrews
Peabody	Slim Summerville
Lov	Ward Bond
George Payne	Grant Mitchell
Grandma	Zeffie Tilbury
Chief of Police	Russell Simpson
County Clerk	Spencer Charters
Teller	Irving Bacon
Mr. Lester	Charles Waldron
Auto Dealer	Harry Tyler
Mayor	Charles Halton
Rector	Charles Trowbridge
Garage Man	Erville Alderson
Man on Road	Francis Ford
Clerk	George Chandler

ALL that "Tobacco Road" might have been on the stage, all that it should have been to justify its record-breaking run, is brilliantly realized in the screen adaptation at the Roxy. The trio responsible for "The Grapes of Wrath" last year has combined courage and artistry again to achieve a masterpiece. John Ford's superlative direction, Nunnally Johnson's tough and knowing script and Darryl Zanuck's uncompromising production have resulted in a memorable motion picture. It will be a great year on the screen if 1941 turns up another film as fine as this one.

The temptation to merely photograph the Jack Kirkland play has been valiantly resisted. Instead of being a slapstick account of moral degeneration among the hillbillies, "Tobacco Road" on the screen is a savage and compelling study of what the human spirit can be reduced to by unproductive soil and hunger. The Jeeter Lester of the film is not only a comic, lecherous reprobate but a tragic old man, struggling to keep some contact with the only constant he knows in human experience—the earth. The show is leavened with ribald humor and the crazy doings of people too desperate to have anything to lose by them, but it is always an honest dramatic document, rather than a glorified peepshow.

To accomplish this, the script has drawn far more heavily from the original Erskine Caldwell novel than from the play. As one who found the latter a meretricious compound of sly come-ons, this seems to me the height of good sense. As the film stands, Johnson has fashioned a true and eloquent continuity which is essentially tragic, even with an after-thought happy ending. You can read just as much significance into the work as you wish to. It is all there. Meanwhile, Ford has done one of his most triumphant pieces of staging in keeping the motion picture engrossing as well as full of meaning. In terms of integrity or craftsmanship the screen has shown up the theater in no uncertain manner.

Many film-goers will undoubtedly be anxious to know how Hollywood censorship has affected the enter-

Gene Tierney



In "Tobacco Road"

prise. Some of the sexy horse-play of the drama has been muted, and the scene where the Lesters spy on the consummation of Dude's and Sister Bessie's wedding is out. In this instance, taboos have helped rather than hurt a screen offering, I think. There is still a strong undercurrent of moral depravity in "Tobacco Road," as there should be, but it does not distort the true central theme of sheer hunger and its demoralizing effects. The film has a sound social and economic fabric as well as Rabelaisian accents, and it is the most stirring sort of human drama.

While Ford has determined every inflection of the offering in his masterful direction, the acting is exceedingly good. Charley Grapewin plays Jeeter with pathetic dignity as well as shifty connivery. A real person, rather than a caricature, emerges as he pulls himself together when threatened with eviction from his barren acres, even trying to sell Dude's new car to get rent money. Marjorie Rambeau as the lusty, hypocritical Sister Bessie, buying a young husband with an automobile, is superb, and William Tracy is properly hysterical as Dude.

Then there is Gene Tierney, giving a sensitive and beautifully modulated portrayal of Ellie May, who has lost her harelip in the film, but is too old to marry at twenty-three. Ward Bond as Lov, who is deserted by Ellie May's sister, although all he did was tie her up and throw sticks and stones at her, is coarsely persuasive, and all the other players turn in the honest and convincing performances that "Tobacco Road" demanded. Here is a film which is a hundred times better than its theatrical prototype—a challenging reminder of the screen's vast potentialities as well as a fascinating entertainment.

Box Office DIGEST

VOLUME 12, NO. 16



HOLLYWOOD, CALIF., MARCH 18, 1941

★
*The
Only
Authentic
Box
Office
Figures
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★

25c

*The Box Office
Reports:*

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ARTS AND SCIENCES

'Nice Girl?' Wins Honors For New 'U'

See Page 5

The Box Office
DIGEST "HONOR BOX"

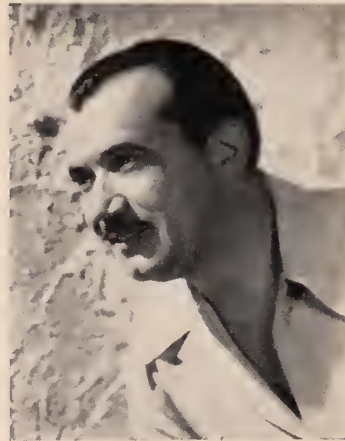
The Biggest Grossing Release Of The Past Week
This Week **UNIVERSAL wins with**
'NICE GIRL?' 126%



Producer
JOSEPH PASTERNAK



Art Director
JACK OTTERSON



Photographer
JOSEPH VALENTINE



Director
WILLIAM SEITER

Screenplay
RICHARD CONNELL
GLADYS LEHMAN

Based on Play by
PHYLLIS DUGANNE



DEANNA DURBIN

Featured
ROBERT STACK
ROBERT BENCHLEY
HELEN BRODERICK
ANN GILLIS
ELIZABETH RISDON
NANA BRYANT
GEORGE BILLINGS
TOMMY KELLY
MARCIA MAE JONES



WALTER BRENNAN



ANNE GWYNNE



FRANCHOT TONE

The Box Office DIGEST

*The Industry's
Distinctive Weekly*

UPS AND DOWNS

An Editorial by ROBERT E. WELSH

An exhibitor who prefers that his name be not mentioned, since no wise exhibitor desires to be quoted in any way that might start those vigilant hounds, the film salesmen, on his trail, writes us an interesting letter on the new "five in a group" method of selling.

His thoughts go this way: "It seems to me that in all the comment I have heard in the industry about the possible effects of the consent decree new method of selling that one interesting angle has been overlooked.

"Let me explain: It is common experience of all in this business that the leadership in proportion of hits on a program varies from year to year. One year MGM will lead the parade, the next it might be Fox, and in others, Warners, and I suppose you could go over a ten or fifteen year span and find that practically all majors have had their turn.

"Now what does this fact of history bring about in the operation of exhibitor buying?

"When he had to buy an entire program from top companies, and without seeing the pictures, relying solely on the campaign book and the sales department's enthusiasm—he was always buying on the basis of past performances, or rather of the one PAST SEASON'S PERFORMANCE.

"It was natural psychology. Some one program stood head and shoulders above all his other buys in the past season. Clinging to some hope that he was using buying sense he made certain that he would get THAT program no matter what the difficulties, and then do his trading on the others.

"But what happened all too often?

* * *

"Last year's banner program very frequently became the next season's dud—and particularly so since he had probably been hopped up to make it his most expensive buy.

"That was the exhibitor's worry. But there is another side of the picture. The producer's.

"We can take it for granted that all Hollywood is TRYING at all times to make hit pictures. No one in a production seat deliberately loafes on the job, though he may make errors of judgement, he may get screwy ideas as to what

constitutes entertainment, he may hold on to some anaemic star too long, or miss out on hopes for a coming youngster.

"He may be just a genius one year, and in the next twelve months still a genius, but a genius out of luck. Too many of the shots he calls go wild to hold his average.

"But under the past system of block booking, when he regains his touch, when he can't seem to do anything wrong, when the dice always roll right, it takes a full season for his company to begin to cash in fully on what has happened.

"Because last year's leader—the fellow at the top of the heap when a new selling season rolls round in the Fall—is getting the plums in money and choice play dates.

* * *

"We are just talking now about past performance booking's effect on the production heads. But what of the companies that have had a run of bad seasons, have completely overhauled their production set-up, and really start to go places? It also takes them a year to cash in.

"With the five in a group method of selling, and with the exhibitor given an opportunity to see the pictures he buys, all this will be changed.

"I think that is one reason why Darryl Zanuck is so busily active lining up his producer array. He is out to get the jump on the field when the day rolls around for that block of five booking. If he keeps on spreading top brains around the organization he is insuring that all of his groups of five will stand on their own in the competitive market.

" So I say:

"For the exhibitor no longer forced to rely on his last year's ledgers entirely in the matter of this year's buying, the new method will be a relief. If he can't pick his groups then, in competition, it will be because his own showman's judgement is at fault.

"For the top majors who have fought it out in recent years for the leadership, it means a stern test.

"For the companies that are on the up-grade, it means they won't have to wait so long to be rewarded."

DISTRIBUTORS' BATTING AVERAGE FOR 1940

		%
1. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer	46 Releases	100
2. United Artists	21 Releases	99
3. Twentieth Century-Fox	48 Releases	93
4. Warners-First National	46 Releases	90
5. Paramount	42 Releases	87
6. Universal	50 Releases	78
7. RKO-Radio	48 Releases	78
8. Columbia	41 Releases	75
9. Republic	25 Releases	70
10. Monogram	26 Releases	65

*Does not include "Gone With the Wind," 388%, sold under special contract, and produced by David Selznick.

The Highlighter: **Covers the Picture News Front in a Quick Glance**

The week was marked by moves from here to there. . . Mark Hellinger moves over from Warners to Twentieth Century. . . Fred Kohlmar moves from Twentieth to Paramount. . . The Mark Hellinger move was pretty well forecast ever since it became known that he had presented his resignation to Warners, even though it was known that he could have had his choice of other prize offers. . . But the Fred Kohlmar shift is a puzzle, coming just after Zanuck had given him plums to guide in "Tall, Dark and Handsome," and "That Night in Rio". . . At any rate, Twentieth can be congratulated at grabbing Hellinger from the competition, for Hellinger, ever since he broke in "learning" the production game on less important pictures, and then graduated to the big opportunities, has been going like a house afire. . . That totals up now to LeBaron, Lubitsch, and Hellinger as reinforcements for the Twentieth production staff. . . And they still have Harry Joe Brown, whose box office record is a pretty healthy one. . . The shifting around also brought Jerry Wald his opportunity as an associate producer at Warners. . . Wald, like Hellinger, is also a former newspaper man. . . Though, in Hellinger's case the word "former" should not be used, he is still an important newspaper man, along with the new chores. . . Jerry Wald abandoned a fine reputation in New York when he joined the pictures and started piling up a good list of screen credits as a writer.

BUT THERE WERE MOVES AND MORE MOVES

An all around week of movement it was. . . Ann Sheridan jogs back to Warners, settling a lengthy sit-around strike. . . We think it a wise move for the player to get back on the screen as soon as possible, and grab some of the luscious parts that are coming up. . . Before too many others get them, with always the possibility that some of them will hit the jackpot. . . Jack Moss and Henry Hathaway complete their move to Walter Wanger's organization by actually hanging their hats on the hatracks, taking their coats off and going to work. . . We have always known what Hathaway has on the ball, and Jack Moss proved at Paramount—notably with "The Biscuit Eater"—that he has plenty in production guidance. . . Moves, moves, moves. . . Tay Garnett over to RKO to direct "Unexpected Uncle". . . Russ Hayden from his role of "Lucky" in the Hopalong Cassidy series to a Columbia contract, leaving Harry Sherman to find a new pardner for Bill Boyd. . . Which Harry says he has in an honest to goodness cowboy and rodeo champ, yet to be unveiled on the

screen. . . And, still speaking of movement, Ted Tetzlaff, veteran Paramount cinematographer, after long and illustrious service behind the lens, steps up into a director's berth. . . Part of Frank Freeman's well-liked policy of rewarding the faithful with opportunities they have earned.

TECHNICOLOR SHOWS WAY ON ANNUAL REPORTS

Technicolor has issued its annual report to stockholders in the form of a brochure that is lengthy, fully explanatory, and comprehensive. . . A copy goes to every stockholder. . . We would like to see some picture company issue such an annual report some day, one that would really tell the stockholders what was happening to their money. . . Or, are picture companies annual reports just supposed to be required reading for puzzle fans? . . . Speaking of Technicolor, we are not surprised that showman Buddy DeSylva, new Paramount chief, is going to make stage producer Buddy DeSylva's Broadway hit, "Louisiana Purchase" in the color medium. . . Buddy is too shrewd a builder of shows to neglect the added star values in Technicolor for such a subject. . . Besides, the spectacle of Bob Hope blushing in Technicolor should alone be worth the price of admission. . . David Selznick is warming up like a stake horse at the starting gate. . . The signing of famous W. Somerset Maugham for an original is his latest news. . . That makes about four top vehicles already in the works. . . It won't be long now before you hear the starting bell. . . The "Citizen Kane" release decision is still in the "on agin, off agin, Finnigan" stage. . . What a mess for George Schaefer to steer his company out of. . . As a sidelight—Hearst's present good will tour of Mexico, and the millions of dollars of columnar publicity he is giving its tourist attractions and public officials is not a particularly happy forecast for the fate of "Citizen Kane" below the Rio Grande if the publisher pulls the strings he will be able to.

TRAVELLING HERE AND THERE AT THE STUDIOS

Zanuck lost no time lining up the next one for Fritz Lang's direction following his hit with "Western Union". . . Keep your eyes on Eddie Small, whose last was "Son of Monte Cristo". . . He is lining up a definite enlarged program for United Artists next season, and buying some important properties. . . After another year with Jello he will be boss of his own choice time period on the air, and can sell himself to

the highest bidder, with the successful bidder buying two assets, Benny, and a prized time period. . . That's a deal. . . John Wayne doesn't get much time to idle these days—hasn't had much in fact since John Ford limelighted him in "Stagecoach". . . Latest deal is to top the cast of Cecil De Mille's next big one, "Reap the Wild Wind". . . Aside from Wayne's tremendous progress as an actor and a star value, wonder if anybody ever gave consideration to the fact that the kids who made him their No. 1 Western star when he was in Monogram horse oprys have now grown into the age that exhibitors figure gives them the bulk of their business? . . . The Pipeline reports on the Arthur Hornblow, Jr.-Paramount nearing special, "I Wanted Wings" are hot. . . Lucky Humberstone, who hasn't always got the breaks that should apply to the nickname he got way back in assistant director days, is getting his reward for "Tall, Dark and Handsome" with assignment to a coming big one "Sun Valley."

STILL RIDING AROUND THE STUDIO CIRCUIT

Paramount announces a change of title on their fine attraction, "The Hardboiled Canary". . . It will now be "There's Magic in Music". . . Much more fitting for the subject being sold. . . Incidentally, it is The Digest review, alone among the trade papers, which said in its opening paragraph about the original misnomer, "That title always makes us shudder". . . It sounded like selling Suzanne Foster with Mae West technique. . . The studios are beginning to buy into Broadway shows with renewed frequency, and Paramount, banking on Buddy De Sylva's uncanny knowledge of what constitutes a Broadway hit may be expected to go in for its share. . . Last week they took a piece of the new Laura and S. J. Perelman show. . . This makes the second stab in the dark for Paramount, the first turning out very successfully with "The Lady in the Dark". . . Bill LeBaron's first assignments at Twentieth have been set, one a drama "Miss Pilgrim's Progress," the other a musical with a prize fight background, "A Straight Left". . . That ought to make a great combination, Dave Hempstead with his fine production record of hits, and Ben Hecht on the story, at RKO. . . With the tough assignment of breaking in a new star, French importation, Michele Morgan. . . Speaking about Technicolor's annual report to stockholders above, we forgot the slightly trivial financial detail that the stockholders got news that profits were up. . . All this despite a voluntary one cent a foot reduction in print prices made last year.

The Box Office: 'Nice Girl?' Clicks

For Pasternak-Seiter-Durbin Trio

Of 6 New Releases In The Past Week, Only

1 Ran Over 100%, 1 Came Through

Okay, And 4 Were Very Weak.

UNIVERSAL—1 Release

Universal takes top honors this week with the new Deanna Durbin production "NICE GIRL?" which on its first openings is averaging 126%, better than 10% above Deanna's last picture "Spring Parade"—which probably indicates that Deanna's many fans prefer her in a story with an American background.

Miss Durbin has an excellent supporting cast headed by Franchot Tone, Walter Brennan, Robert Stack, Bob Benchley, Helen Broderick and Ann Gillis. Joseph Pasternak, who has produced the entire Durbin series, also handled this one and the old reliable Bill Seiter, who also directed Deanna in "It's A Date", directed this one.

Exhibitors can expect much better results on this one than on the last Durbin.

WARNERS—2 Releases

Warners-First National Studios have two new releases this week, one a fairly good attraction and the second a rather weak programmer.

"FOOTSTEPS IN THE DARK", the new Errol Flynn picture, on its first few openings is not any too strong at a 98%

2 FEATURES "GOING UP"

	Was	Now
Buck Privates	UNIV	86 88
Maisie Was a Lady	MGM	83 85

6 New Releases Not in the Last Issue

		%	Est.
Nice Girl?	UNIV	126	130
Footsteps in the Dark	WAR	98	110
Face Behind the Mask	COL	73	75
The Great Mr. Nobody	WAR	72	75
Boston Blackie	COL	71	70
You're Out of Luck	MONO	62	65

average. When Flynn appears in Warner Brothers' big western epics such as "Dodge City", "Santa Fe Trail", etc., the figures generally run from 130% to 140%; yet in straight modern stories Flynn doesn't seem to pull so well. However, considering the difference in production costs and exhibitor's film rentals, 98% is quite a passable figure.

Seen opposite Mr. Flynn is Brenda Marshall, who was also his leading lady in "The Sea Hawk". The featured cast is headed by Ralph Bellamy, Alan Hale, Allen Jenkins and Bill Frawley.

Robert Lord acted as associate producer to Hal Wallis and Lloyd Bacon very capably directed this modern mystery society yarn.

Warners' second release this week is another Byran Foy programmer "THE GREAT MR. NOBODY," 72%. This one stars Eddie Albert of "Four Daughters" fame with Warner Brothers' new find, Jo Ann Leslie, in the feminine lead. Alan Hale and John Litel are featured.

This was originally sold to exhibitors under the title, "The Stuff of Heroes". "The Great Mr. Nobody" will make a very

satisfactory filler but can't be depended on for very much of a draw.

COLUMBIA—Also 2 Releases

Columbia Studios have two new releases this week, both of which are programmers from the Irving Briskin unit.

The first of these is "THE FACE BEHIND THE MASK," 73%, another of the horror series, starring Peter Lorre.

Columbia's second release is "BOSTON BLACKIE", 71%, starring Chester Morris with Rochelle Hudson and Constance Worth featured. Robert Florey directed and Ralph Cohn produced.

These two Columbia programmers will make good Friday-Saturday booking or else spot them in on a bank night.

MONOGRAM—1 Release

Monogram's only release this week, "YOU'RE OUT OF LUCK", 62%, is another of the Frankie Darro kid series that is probably intended for the Saturday matinees. There are no names of importance in the supporting cast. Howard Bretherton directed for Producer Lindsay Parsons.

7 FEATURES "GOING DOWN"

	Was	Now
This Thing Called Love	COL	130 127
Andy Hardy's Private Secretary		
	MGM	128 124
Strawberry Blonde	WAR	127 124
Virginia	PAR	126 123
High Sierra	WAR	114 112
Hudson's Bay	FOX	109 106
Flight from Destiny	WAR	80 78

FOR REVIEWS

THAT SAY

SOMETHING

Box

Office

Digest

THE HONOR BOX PICTURE



produced by

***JOE
PASTERNAK***



A NEW UNIVER

THE HONOR BOX PICTURE

**WILLIAM
SEITER**

directed

- ★ "NICE GIRL"
- ☆ "HIRED WIFE"
- ★ "IT'S A DATE"

preparing
"BELIEVE MY HEART"

★ JOE PASTERNAK
Production

☆ WM. A. SEITER
Production



Money Already in the Bank for Capra's 'John Doe'

WARNERS-FIRST NATIONAL

The Digest's Box Office Estimate
165%

Producer-Director Frank Capra
Screenplay Robert Riskin
Based on a Story by Richard Connell,
Robert Presnell
Stars Gary Cooper, Barbara Stanwyck
Featured: Edward Arnold, Walter Brennan, Spring
Byington, James Gleason, Gene Lockhart,
Rod La Rocque, Irving Bacon, Regis Toomey,
J. Farrell MacDonald, Warren Hymer, Harry
Holman, Andrew Tombes, Pierre Watkin,
Stanley Andrews, Mitchell Lewis, Charles
Wilson, Vaughan Glasser, Sterling Holloway,
Mike Frankovich, Knox Manning, John B.
Hughes, Hall Johnson Choir.
Photographer George Barnes

There is no news, and not even critical judgement, in stating the fact that Frank Capra has delivered a money picture to Warner Brothers. "Meet John Doe" will be tinkling box office automatic machines with a merry tune.

That leaves a reviewer little to talk about except his personal reactions to the picture as a whole, and particularly to the performances the director has gained from the troupers.

So we guess we will have to approach the picture that way.

Well, as to the personal reactions—we had a heck of a good time for most of the running time, but we also had our moments when we thought Capra was going overboard to deliver a message, with the result that proceedings were on the off-edge of being too talky.

This "message" stuff is a sort of combination of "God Bless America" and a homespun biblical tapestry "Love Thy Neighbor." It is a very good idea. We all believe in it. But this time it is laid on with laquer, and it is told in the life of a confused dumbbell, John Doe, who is supposed to be typical of the real America. If that John Doe class takes the lesson one way, we will not have any arguments; if they realize the truth that Capra and Riskin are telling them what saps they are, then you still don't have to worry, because they are probably just those saps.

By this time you have probably gathered the idea that your reviewer is trying to say that he enjoyed a great picture, a bit overlong and talky, but with too much underlining of the poor man's Stars and Stripes.

And, frankly, while this picture is in—and definitely set—for big money, we still have our doubts about letting talk run away with motion pictures for the sake of selling a "message."

About this time a reviewer is compelled to decide that he is just a bit pixillated to be even a trifle captious about a Frank Capra picture. The Capra touch is there in the handling of the scenes; the stars, Gary Cooper and Barbara Stanwyck, are great

Current Reviews

	We Est.
Meet John Doe	WAR 165
Road to Zanzibar	PAR 145
Topper Returns	UA 90
The Round Up	PAR 80
Man Betrayed	REP 80
Sleepers West	FOX 75
The Penalty	MGM 75
Back in the Saddle	REP 75
Mr. Dynamite	UNIV 70

and the support, in Capra manner, is excellent.

Gary Cooper has the toughest part since he is representing John Doe—in other words, the average American. It is a confused and never very well defined role. We are never very certain whether Gary is just a dumbbell, or someone with qualities that should cause Barbara Stanwyck to fall in love with him.

Barbara Stanwyck has the meaty role of the piece, the characterization that must give its heart to override the speeches. She is a smart aleck newspaper gal who inveigles Cooper into a frame-up deal for circulation purposes, then finds she has been a dirty trickster, and also has the worry of having fallen in love with the victim. She gets a topper scene at the climax that will be remembered as long as picture-makers remember pictures.

Cooper and Miss Stanwyck carry the picture—plus the directorial touches that Capra can give to any scene.

And then there is the support.

The opportunities for the supporting cast are spotty, since the thin story line must carry on with Gary and Barbara. However, they give a fine opportunity for Edward Arnold, for a repressed heavy characterization—with a flash reformation in one speech at the end—and it is a welcome new Arnold. Jimmie Gleason puts his teeth into a casual role that develops into an actor's delight scene when he plays about half a reel of a drunk, and boy, he goes to town. We may have used the phrase a few times before, but are going to repeat it: They will start rediscovering that Jimmy Gleason is an actor.

They will probably also discover Regis Toomey. He has a long speech—too long a speech, to tell the truth, on the "Love Thy Neighbor" theme, but what a job he does with it.

Spring Byington is in a mother role, as Miss Stanwyck's parent, so neatly handled that you are willing to vote her the universal mother. With sparse footage, it is one of the most appealing characterizations Miss Byington has given the screen.

Walter Brennan is present as a hobo pal of Gary Cooper, with his usual efficiency, though he hasn't the opportunities one expected from the advance ballyhoo.

Gene Lockhart, who never misses, has a good spot. He is a fluttery mayor who just flutters in and out of the story, but he never misses selling his scenes. It was a treat to see that grand old trouser—who also teaches at USC—J. Farrell MacDonald, show the youngsters how to get every inch out of an eighteen inch role.

Robert Riskin has written a screen play that will combine with the picture's values to make it probably the top money picture of the year, despite our worries about the fact that it isn't the best picture Frank Capra has made. But it will do, and do plenty, until a more symmetrical whale comes along.

The story: Well, it starts on a screwy basis, which is part of the reason for the trouble in keeping it moving after the first three reels, and that basis consists of Barbara, discharged and disgruntled newspaper columnist, concocting a fake letter in which a certain John Doe promises to jump off the highest building in town on Christmas Eve. She finds Gary Cooper, who is a lame-armed baseball pitcher, willing to promise anything to get treatment for his ailing wing. The heavy is Edward Arnold, publisher of the newspaper, who suddenly realizes that the John Doe movement might transport him to the White House on a sort of Hitler program. So—Gary is the dupe for most of the way, Barbara the girl, who suddenly realizes that she has done her man wrong, and all ends happily.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: Has had the greatest build-up of any picture of the year. Can't miss for top money. So don't get too concerned about this critic's worries. Previewed March 12th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "It is to be enthusiastically reported that Frank Capra and Robert Riskin have turned out another modern-day film masterpiece. 'Meet John Doe' is a courageous social document, perhaps the most courageous ever attempted on the screen. Likewise, it is a great entertainment, emotionally stirring, magnificently enacted and stunningly presented. It will earn millions at the box office."

VARIETY: "Frank Capra produces another of his great film documents and great popular entertainments. It will be a prodigious money-maker and a showman's pride."

Crosby-Hope-Lamour Trio, Click Again

PARAMOUNT

The Digest's Box Office Estimate
145%

Produced by Paul Jones
 Director Victor Schertzinger
 Stars: Bing Crosby, Bob Hope, Dorothy Lamour
 Featuring: Una Merkel, Eric Blore, with Douglas
 Dumbrille, Iris Adrian, Lionel Royce, Buck
 Woods, Leigh Whipper, Ernest Whitman,
 Noble Johnson, Joan Marsh, Luis Alberni,
 Robert Middlemass.
 Photography Ted Tezlaff
 Lyrics and Music Johnny Burke and
 Jimmie Van Heusen
 Time 87 minutes

"Hay-wire and Handsome" is probably the phrase that best describes "The Road to Zanzibar". Hay-wire it certainly is, but handsome, in the sense of a full carload of laughs, it is doubly certain. Paramount has a top money-maker, and all concerned with the production a bold faced credit for their records.

A group of the top entertainers in the show business get together on "The Road to Zanzibar," backed by adroit direction and an ace-high gag line script. It may gradually dawn on you that you are only seeing an illustrated elongated radio script, but who cares—the illustrations are good, and the script is great.

Bing Crosby and Bob Hope team up to toss the lines back and forth for most of the picture's footage and there can be no doubt that the duo is a permanent. There is a lesson in timing for any comedian in watching these real troupers—and hearing them—as they take a brittle piece of story material and make it sparkle. For our money, you can give us reels and more reels of Crosby and Hope throwing those lines back and forth at each other.

And don't forget—the marquee also has that Dorothy Lamour allure. And Dorothy

gets plenty of moments to give the audience that allure in the natural course of the story. Miss Lamour warbles only one number—"You're Dangerous"—but it is a good one, and it is probably better to send one number home than to be burdened with three or more so-so melodies. For the sake of the freshmen—and, incidentally, the exhibitors—we might mention that Miss Lamour's physical charms are not neglected. Even without a sarong.

Then there is a welcome appearance from Una Merkel. Earlier in the week Miss Merkel turned in a fine job in a Universal picture, and about this time you will probably find the critics re-discovering that that gal is a trouper.

Support is fine, but the story structure is such that it is carried by the principals, and the bulk of that on a sort of "Primrose and Dockstader" team routine—in white face, however—between Crosby and Hope.

Director Victor Schertzinger has shown his usual skill in blending music with motion picture, but goes further in clinching honors with his handling of patter laughs. The general effect is that Crosby and Hope were having a heck of a good time, and since the audience also gets that feeling, give the proper bouquets to the direction that brought about the effect.

You have the reviewer up a stump when he starts to tell the story. As a matter of fact, there isn't any. We are introduced to two Americans, stranded in a synthetic Africa. Bing is the brains of the team, Bob is the "Fearless" who does the work—and Bing gives him every sort of job from being expelled from a cannon to trying to fly without wings.

Into the action enter two girls, Dorothy Lamour and Una Merkel. They are trying to scrape up the money so that the beauteous

Dorothy can get to the other side of Africa to marry a certain millionaire. They happen to catch Bing and Bob at the time when the team, which is, incidentally, always planning to buy return trip tickets to the States when they can maneuver the price, is temporarily flush with money. The girls pull a racket, get the boys started on a safari across Africa, and for no particular reason the story gets moving.

For equally inconsequential reasons, the story wanders off so that we can have a couple of hilarious reels with Crosby and Hope alternately gods and finally potential cannibal fodder in the African wilds. The picture is crisp with laughs throughout, but these scenes are tops in old-fashioned belly-laughs.

Producer Paul Jones is piling up his credits on the joyous side of the Paramount ledger.

The lyrics by Johnny Burke, music by Jimmie Van Heusen, include numbers that you will be buying on the records if you can't get by the BMI barrier. They have been spotted well. They are few enough in number to give them audience value, and they are good.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: A top money picture. Previewed March 10th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "One of the greatest pieces of entertainment that was ever offered theatres for dating and extended runs."

VARIETY: "Following 'Road to Singapore' with this companion piece, 'Road to Zanzibar,' Paramount demonstrates that it has found a hit comedy formula in the Bing Crosby-Bob Hope-Dorothy Lamour combination and the treatment of material with the riotous abandon given by Director Victor Schertzinger and the repeat script bell-ringer by Frank Butler and Don Hartman. This is top-layer comedy stuff for any man's theatre and will keep audiences in gales of laughter. As a coin getter, it will stand up amongst the elect of the season."

'The Penalty' Artistic But Doubtful B. O.

MGM

The Digest's Box Office Estimate
75%

Producer Jack Chertok
 Director Harold S. Bucquet
 Screenplay Harry Ruskin, John C. Higgins
 From Play by Martin Berkeley
 Stars Edward Arnold, Lionel Barrymore
 Featured: Gene Reynolds, Marsha Hunt, Robert
 Sterling, Emma Dunn, Veda Ann Borg, Rich-
 ard Lane, Gloria De Haven, Grant Mitchell,
 Phil Silvers, Ralph Byrd.
 Photographer Harold Rosson
 Time 70 Minutes

The basic story premise of "The Penalty" has been used so often that you should not be fooled by just hearing it boiled down. It is just about the tough little kid who reforms in the right environment. Regeneration formula No. 3X.

But it has always been good, and it has never been done better than in this picture under the finessed direction of Harold Bucquet, with able assistance from a corking cast, a skillfully constructed screenplay.

Entertainment values are a problem. Where they will take their drama straight and comparatively heavy, it will click. Where they prefer the current streamlined blend of tongue in cheek and meller they will not be so hot.

MGM has given it a top cast, including Edward Arnold, Lionel Barrymore, and Gene Reynolds, with the prize opportunity of going of course, to the latter youngster in a story of this sort.

The story is a blend of crime, and thrilling meller, with the joys and honesty of the rural life. Raymond is the son of a notorious killer, Edward Arnold, for whom the FBI have no love. But the kid thinks his dad is the greatest man in the world, and readily accepts his tutoring in the fine arts of being tough. He lands in a reformatory, however, while his wily father still eludes arrest. Eventually Gene is paroled to a farm.

Comes the regeneration, but always hanging over Raymond like a shadow is the

fact that his father wants him back in his way of life. The FBI knew this and the parole was really bait for a trap.

Bucquet's direction handles this combination of tough environment, the kid's reformation under the influence of a normal life, and the thrills of FBI law enforcement with the skill that he has evidenced in all his MGM productions. Jack Chertok's bow as a feature producer shows that he knows how to put together the right elements.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: Date it with a musical or screwy comedy. If playing singles, spot it for the adult nights. Previewed March 11th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "It is a gem of entertainment which bathes its audience in a flood-tide of warmth. 'The Penalty' outshines many vaunted specials and is certain to become a sleeper hit."

VARIETY: "This story of the weaning away of a son from blind loyalty to a ruthless criminal father is given an intense sense of reality which holds suspenseful interest every foot of the way. It will stand up in either spot of the program in almost every situation."

Mystery Peps Roach's Latest 'Topper Returns'

HAL ROACH-UA
The Digest's Box Office Estimate
90%

Producer Hal Roach
Director Roy Del Ruth
Original Screenplay Jonathan Latimer,
Gordon Douglas
Based on Characters by Thorne Smith
Additional Dialogue Paul Gerard Smith
Stars Joan Blondell, Roland Young,
Carole Landis
Featured: Billie Burke, Dennis O'Keefe, Patsy
Kelly, H. B. Warner, Eddie (Rochester)
Anderson, George Zucco, Donald MacBride,
Rafaela Ottiano, Trevor Bardette.
Photographer Norbert Brodine
Time 88 Minutes

"Topper Returns" and this time she goes for a mystery tale with accent heavily on the comedy. There is also a new ghost, Joan Blondell.

Completely screwy, the picture goes high, wide and handsome for laughs and gets them in abundance. It is definitely a "topper" comedy hit.

Roy Del Ruth handled the directorial reins, which is pretty automatically assurance of success in the comedy field. He has used every trick of his long experience to keep the proceedings moving fast, to extract the last drop of laughter from a situation. And it can be reported that Joan Blondell is a thoroughly delightful wraith, with the very large possibility that she will draw better than Constance Bennett at the box office.

It's a murder mystery, with Joan the early victim, and then trying her darndest throughout the rest of the picture to help the early characters solve the crime. Of course she makes just about as much humorous trouble as she does good.

Script by Jonathan Latimer and Gordon Douglas is a corking job, with the fine Broadway hand of Paul Gerard Smith evident in an "additional dialogue" contribution.

Roland Young and Billie Burke are again

back as the screwy married couple, Carole Landis and Dennis O'Keefe divide the romantic honors. Mention must also be made of the welcome presence of Eddie "Rochester" Anderson in the cast. You probably don't need our word for it that he gets his share of laughs.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "Hal Roach has met with greater success in the 'Topper' series than in any other of his feature-length comedy efforts. As far as screen novelty is concerned, Topper has encountered a cropper, for solid roars of laughter are no longer to be expected when trick photography causes a wraith to erase itself. Consequently, 'Topper Returns,' third of the Roach group places more pronounced accent upon the mystery element of the tale fabricated by Jonathan Latimer and Gordon Douglas, peoples it with completely wacky characters, and entrusts the direction to the very accomplished Roy Del Ruth."

VARIETY: "Picture runs the gamut of hilarity and should prove equally as effective at the box office as have previous films of this type."

'Sleepers West' Starts Fast; Slows For Curves

20th CENTURY-FOX
The Digest's Box Office Estimate
75%

Executive Producer Sol M. Wurtzel
Director Eugene Ford
Screenplay Lou Breslow
Based on a Novel by Frederick Nebel
The Character 'Michael Shayne' by Brett Halliday
Star Lloyd Nolan
Featured: Lynn Bari, Mary Beth Hughes, Louis
Jean Heydt, Edward Brophy, Don Costello,
Ben Carter, Don Douglas, Oscar O'Shea,
Harry Hayden, Hamilton MacFadden, Ferike
Boros.
Photographer Peverell Marley
Time 74 Minutes

"Sleepers West" gets off to a flying start, and some good early reels, then finds itself getting tangled up in its own feet. The result can be tabbed fair entertainment, but not up to the caliber of most recent Fox B's.

The story is another one of those attempts to tell a "Grand Hotel" yarn on a railroad train. But instead of being as simple and

straight-lined as such a premise would suggest, it becomes involved in two or three story lines, necessitating a super-abundance of characters, and finally reaching the point where you are not particularly concerned over anything that might happen.

The book character of Michael Shane, private detective, has been borrowed by the screen writer for a script based on a Frederick Nebel novel. Lloyd Nolan is seen for the second time as the unconventional detective, and pleasingly so. Lynn Bari is efficient as a newspaper gal, with Mary Beth Hughes getting some fine acting moments.

Basis of the action is the fact that Lloyd Nolan is aboard a train bound for San Francisco, shepherding an important witness whose testimony he knows will save an innocent man at a murder trial. The complications enter into the plot because of the presence of a number of other passengers aboard the train who have ideas of their own. There

is Lynn Bari, newspaper reporter, Edward Brophy and Don Costello, as the typical ordinary dicks, and Louis Jean Heydt, a husband running away from home troubles. And top worry is the witness, Mary Beth Hughes, always willing to sip from the bottle.

Performances are good, until the players seem to get confused themselves. Don Costello, of the detective team, deserves a special mention.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: Rates only fair B fodder. Previewed March 13th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "Second of the 'Michael Shayne' detective series at 20th-Fox, 'Sleepers West,' is a fast-moving yarn that packs plenty of entertainment for its market."

VARIETY: "Too many characters and too much story dilute the strength of this potion, but, despite this too-muchness, the drama of what happens on a train ride to an assortment of passengers and crew has enough entertainment to travel comfortably as a second section of the bill."

'Back in the Saddle' Top Autry Picture

REPUBLIC
The Digest's Box Office Estimate
75%

Associate Producer Harry Grey
Director Lew Landers
Original Screenplay Richard Murphy,
Jesse Lasky, Jr.
Star Gene Autry
Featured: Smiley Burnette, Mary Lee, Edward
Norris, Jacqueline Wells, Addison Richards,
Arthur Loft, Edmund Elton, Joe McGuinn,
Edmund Cobb, Robert Barron.
Photographer Ernest Miller
Time 71 Minutes

"Back in the Saddle" rates high in the Autry roster, both as an action western and for its musical offerings. And there is an abundance of both the action and the melody in its seventy minutes of running time.

The action occurs this time through Gene's efforts to help the cattlemen in their

fight with an unscrupulous copper mine whose debris is poisoning the vital streams. Starting slowly on the gun play, it eventually winds up with plenty of that, and is topped by a smashing scene when his friends rescue the star from dire trouble—a mob has him at bay in the jailhouse—by causing a stampede of cattle through the town's street.

Director Lew Landers has turned in a workmanlike job, particularly in his ability to maintain pace despite the fact that the picture is enriched with eight vocal numbers. Gene gets most of these, with one solo spot going to little Mary Lee, and another to Jacqueline Wells.

The better than average script, as Westerns go, is the work of Jesse Lasky, Jr., and Richard Murphy.

Supporting cast is excellent, with Smiley Burnette on hand for his usual quota of laughs. Addison Richards turns in a clear-cut gambler characterization.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: A good bet in the Autry series. Previewed March 10th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "For the second time in recent months, Gene Autry benefits from ace directorial handling by Lew Landers. His supporting cast, too, is considerably more than competent, and the result is crack Western entertainment, distinctly to the credit of Republic and Associate Producer Harry Grey."

VARIETY: "A combination of widely-known prairie ballads, the singing of Gene Autry and typical shoot-em-down action put 'Back in the Saddle' up among the film cowpoke's best in his Republic series. Sure-fire meat for all followers of desert drama, picture should win in a walk among the houses catering to the Western trade."

Wayne and Dee Register in 'Man Betrayed'

REPUBLIC

The Digest's Box Office Estimate

80%

Associate Producer Armand Schaefer
Director John H. Auer
Screenplay Isabel Dawn
Original Jack Moffitt
Adaptation Tom Kilpatrick

Stars John Wayne, Francis Dee

Featured: Edward Ellis, Wallace Ford, Ward Bond, Harold Huber, Alexander Granach, Barnett Parker.

Photographer Jack Marta

Time 81 Minutes

John Wayne and Frances Dee make a great top team for ability and personality, and when you combine those appealing factors with a swell job of direction by John H. Auer, you are pretty certain to come out with good entertainment.

That is what has happened in "A Man Betrayed". It will ring the bell for Republic.

And all this despite the fact that the story offers little that is new, and the screenplay does quite a bit of wandering, chief trouble being a surplusage of minor characters.

It is a yarn of corrupt big city politics and rackets, probably based in a large part on slightly disguised conditions over a stretch of years in Kansas City, home of the author, Jack Moffitt.

The fictional city of the picture is thoroughly corrupt, with a big boss, Edward Ellis, owning all the strings and doing all the pulling. John Wayne enters in this situation as a rural lawyer, arriving in the

Big Town to investigate the death of a friend, allegedly a suicide.

His investigation starts a train of action that bring him into contact with Miss Dee,

BRIEF REVIEW

"MR. DYNAMITE"

UNIVERSAL

The Digest's Box Office Estimate

70%

Associate Producer Marshall Grant
Director John Rawlins
Original Screenplay Stanley Crea Rubin

Stars Lloyd Nolan, Irene Hervey

Featured: J. Carrol Naish, Robert Armstrong, Ann Gillis, Frank Gaby, Elizabeth Risdon, Shemp Howard, Cliff Nazarro, Monte (Sonny) Brewer.

Photographer John Boyle

Art Director Jack Otterson

Time 63 Minutes

"Mr. Dynamite" is strictly off the cuff, aimed at no higher market than the one to which it will probably be sold. In that market it will satisfy.

The picture has the advantage of good troupers. Lloyd Nolan, Irene Hervey and J. Carroll Naish carry the top credits and they take the picture in smooth strides.

It all concerns a visit to the big city by Lloyd Nolan, a baseball pitcher, which finds him, while on a sightseeing tour suddenly involved with spies, murder, and what-not. Things happen, alright, and they serve to maintain tempo, but they don't all add up to much.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "That Universal deemed 'Mr. Dynamite' worthy of a press preview is a more baffling mystery than the picture itself propounds."

VARIETY: "Spies, a carnival atmosphere and general competent work in production, direction and playing make 'Mr. Dynamite' sturdy supporting fare."

who is the daughter of the big shot. But accompanied by an exciting train of melodramatic happenings.

Wayne is in full stride as the back country lawyer, getting the shadings of the rural character together with being able to handle the melodramatics when necessary. The role signifies a welcome return to activity by Miss Dee, and we hope to see her more frequently this season.

The veteran character wonder, Edward Ellis—remember "A Man to Remember"?—turns in the performance that you would expect of that trouper.

Balance of the cast is largely a round up of the tried and true henchman players of Hollywood, with that fine actor, Wallace Ford, present in a comparatively minor role.

John Auer directs in staccato tempo, not neglecting his comedy moments, and rates an extra bow for his important individual contribution to a successful picture.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: In Republic's Grade A budget class, and worth it for meller audiences. Previewed March 9th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "In point of production, 'A Man Betrayed' is one of the finest films to come out of Republic. It is, beyond question, the top jobs of Associate Producer, Armand Schaefer and Director John Auer. It misses bursting into full blaze only through writing deficiencies, which this reviewer feels will be overlooked by the paying patrons."

VARIETY: "'A Man Betrayed' seems destined to show its best returns in those general run situations where lack of a suitable title will not prove too big a handicap and the box office value of the John Wayne and Francis Dee names will carry the most weight."

Harry Sherman Steps Out With 'The Round-Up'

HARRY SHERMAN-PARAMOUNT

The Digest's Box Office Estimate

80%

Producer Harry Sherman
Associate Producer Joseph W. Engel
Director Lesley Selander
Screenplay Harold Shumate
Based on a Story by Edmund Day

Stars Richard Dix, Preston Foster, Patricia Morrison
Featured: Don Wilson, Ruth Donnelly, Douglas Dumbrille, Jerome Cowan, Betty Brewer, Morris Ankrum, Richard Curtis, William Haade, Weldon Hevburn, Lane Chandler, Lee "Lasses" White, the King's Men.

Photographer Russell Harlan
Time 90 Minutes

"The Round-Up" is a sturdy old veteran of the box offices, playing up and down the country successfully for a generation, and doing right well on the screen. So it is a pleasure to report that the streamlined 1941 version produced by Harry Sherman for Paramount release will not let the veterans down.

The picture runs long—ninety minutes—probably as a means of insuring it consideration for the top of the bills where it belongs

on the basis of the money and the effort expended. Tighter scripting would undoubtedly have helped, however.

Richard Dix and Preston Foster draw the two top male roles and both have their box office values, that of Dix long established, and that of Preston Foster connected so favorably with the recent winner "North West Mounted Police." Patricia Morrison shares the important honors and registers with charm and ability.

It is probably a late date to repeat the story of "The Round-Up," and it is equally probable that the skeleton has been stolen a hundred times for yarns of city palaces and foreign capitals. It's the triangle, which brings the former lover back to home scenes to bring about trouble for his former sweetheart, Patricia Morrison, and her ranch husband, Richard Dix.

The West of the story is the old West, of marauding Indians and constant menace, which balances against the storms of human emotions of jealousy and suspicion in the triangle.

Sherman has told his tale with the ex-

perienced eye displayed in all his out-door productions, enhanced it with production values aplenty, and as usual, that knowledge of the photographic delights desired by patrons of Westerns. Lesley Selander's direction gets full values from his script.

Ruth Donnelly is on hand for many of the laughs, while followers of radio will respond to a chance to see familiar announcer, Don Wilson, teamed up with her for the comedy. Wilson does a good job, too.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: Okay bet in the super Western class. Previewed March 11th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "Less of a Western in the accepted tradition of such offerings, and more of a period piece set against pioneer backgrounds, the picture emerges as a tribute to its producer. Sherman should be in line for more important higher-budgeted product for Paramount."

VARIETY: "All the experience gained by Sherman in producing the Hopalong Cassidy Westerns for Paramount, a class series in the field, is brought into play to fetch 'The Round-Up' to the screen. A virile drama that merits the 'Western' brand only because of its locale."



THE BATTING AVERAGES

1941

Producers and Associate Producers

	Pictures	%
Joseph Mankiewicz	1	181
David Hempstead	1	143
Harry Joe Brown	1	130
Bruce Manning	1	128
William Perlberg	1	127
Joseph Pasternak	1	126
William Cagney	1	124
Mark Hellinger	1	112
Kenneth Macgowan	1	106
R. A. Rowland	1	101
J. Walter Ruben	2	100

Producer-Directors

	Pictures	%
E. H. Griffith	1	123
Clarence Brown	1	107

Actresses

	Pictures	%
Ginger Rogers	1	143
Rosalind Russell	1	127
Deanna Durbin	1	126
Olivia de Havilland	1	124
Madeleine Carroll	1	123
Carole Lombard	1	121
Ida Lupino	1	112
Margaret Sullivan	2	112
Hedy Lamarr	1	107
Martha Scott	1	101

Directors

	Pictures	%
George Cukor	1	181
Sam Wood	1	143
Fritz Lang	1	130
Robert Stevenson	1	128
Al Hall	1	127
William Sieter	1	126
George B. Seitz	1	124
Alfred Hitchcock	1	121
Raoul Walsh	2	118
Frank Borzage	1	115
Irving Pichel	1	106
Tay Garnett	1	101

Actors

	Pictures	%
Cary Grant	1	181
James Stewart	2	144
Randolph Scott	1	130
Charles Boyer	1	128
Mickey Rooney	1	124
James Cagney	1	124
Fred MacMurray	1	123
Robert Montgomery	1	121
Robert Taylor	1	115
Humphrey Bogart	1	112
Paul Muni	1	106
Robert Young	2	101

All Major Features Released in 1941

Philadelphia Story	MGM	181
Kitty Foyle	RKO	143
Western Union	FOX	130
Back Street	UNIV	128
This Thing Called Love	COL	127
Nice Girl?	UNIV	126
Strawberry Blonde	WAR	124
Andy Hardy's Private Secretary	MGM	124
Virginia	PAR	123
Mr. and Mrs. Smith	RKO	121
Flight Command	MGM	115
High Sierra	WAR	112
Come Live With Me	MGM	107
Hudson's Bay	FOX	106
Cheers for Miss Bishop	UA	105
Footsteps in the Dark	WAR	98
So Ends Our Night	UA	96
Son of Monte Cristo	UA	95

Buck Privates	UNIV	88
Tall Dark and Handsome	FOX	86
Maisie Was a Lady	MGM	85
Victory	PAR	84
Mad Doctor	PAR	81
Blondie Goes Latin	COL	81
You're the One	PAR	80
Three on a Honeymoon	WAR	80
Six Lessons from Madame LaZonga	UNIV	80
Ellery Queen, Master Detective	COL	80
Flight from Destiny	WAR	78
Texas Rangers Ride Again	PAR	78
Invisible Woman	UNIV	78
Road Show	UA	76
Life With Henry	PAR	75
Romance of the Rio Grande	FOX	73
Girl in the News	FOX	73
Face Behind The Mask	COL	73
Phantom Submarine	COL	72
Great Mr. Nobody	WAR	72
Golden Hoofs	FOX	72
Play Girl	RKO	72
Trial of Mary Dugan	MGM	72
Keeping Company	MGM	71
Ride, Kelly, Ride	FOX	71
Boston Blackie	COL	71

Lucky Devils	UNIV	70
Where Did You Get That Girl	UNIV	70
Convoy	RKO	70
She Couldn't Say No	WAR	70
Michael Shayne, Private Detective	FOX	70
Let's Make Music	RKO	70
Land of Liberty	MGM	70
The Case of the Black Parrot	WAR	70
Devil's Command	COL	70
Barnyard Follies	REP	69
Bowery Boy	REP	68
Petticoat Politics	REP	68
Meet the Chump	UNIV	68
Saint in Palm Springs	RKO	67
Phantom of Chinatown	MONO	67
Arkansas Judge	REP	67
Father's Son	WAR	67
Her First Romance	MONO	66
Pride of the Bowery	MONO	63
Chamber of Horrors	MONO	63
You're Out of Luck	MONO	62
The Old Swimming Hole	MONO	60

Box Office

DIGEST

VOLUME 12, NO. 21



54

HOLLYWOOD, CALIF., APRIL 26, 1941

★
The
Only
Authentic
Box
Office
Figures
Published

★

25c

*The Box Office
Reports:*

'Road to Rio' Sings Merry Money Tune

See Page 5

The Box Office
DIGEST "HONOR BOX"

The Biggest Grossing Release Of The Past Week

**This Week FOX wins with
'THAT NIGHT IN RIO' 135%**



Vice-Pres. in Charge of Production
DARRYL F. ZANUCK



Associate Producer
FRED KOHLMAR



Director
IRVING CUMMINGS



ALICE FAYE



DON AMECHE



CARMEN MIRANDA

Screenplay
GEORGE SEATON
BESS MEREDYTH
HAL LONG
Additional Dialogue
SAMUEL HOFFENSTEIN

Based on Play by
RUDOLPH LOTHAR
HANS ADLER

Adaptation
JESSIE ERNST

Photographers
LEON SHAMROY
RAY RENNAHAN



J. CARROL NAISH

Featured
S. Z. SAKALL
CURT BOIS
LEONID KINSKY
FRANK PUGLIA
LILLIAN PORTER
MIRIA MONTEZ
GEORGES RENAVENT
EDWARD CONRAD
FORTUNIO BONANOVA
FLORES BROTHERS
Carmen Miranda's Orchestra

The Box Office **DIGEST**

*The Industry's
Distinctive Weekly*

IT'S A SCREWY BUSINESS

An Editorial by **ROBERT E. WELSH**

We warned our patient readers several weeks ago that we might use the above heading so often that the type would wear out.

Well, the type is still holding up, and the thought is going stronger.

It's a screwy business that lets Joe Breen get away from the important task that he has performed in the past several years.

That's our statement, and the justification for using the standing head above.

* * *

We don't know just why Joe Breen resigned from his post as chaperon for the motion picture industry, and any guess we make is not much more authoritative than the other fellow's.

Of course, all the rumors come to our desk and our ears, just as they do to anyone living in the Hollywood fog. Most of them have Breen, with a natural desire for advancement, moving into this or that important executive position with this or that company.

Which may be an advantageous move for Breen—but it still doesn't make sense to us that the industry as a whole—repeat it, **THE WHOLE INDUSTRY**—will let a man go to the service of **ONE** company, when he is so sadly needed where he is, in the service of all companies.

* * *

And why is he so sorely needed:

We could give a dozen reasons, but one word out of Mister Webster's collection sums them all up:

CONFIDENCE.

Which happens to be something that you cannot buy; you have to earn it.

Let pictures go up and sway a little down in moral content, let columnists have their fun about the idea that girls can't wear sweaters anymore on the screen, let the quips fall where they may—whether in good humor or maliciousness—

THE AMERICAN PUBLIC HAS HAD A SOLID FEELING OF CONFIDENCE IN JOE BREEN.

And when you say "the American public" you say "mothers, fathers, and all who are interested in keeping this world from becoming a worse world." It's a world with a poor enough excuse for living right now.

We can take another aspect of that word: **CONFIDENCE.**

Let it be granted that there have been a hundred and one cases of producers whose efforts to skirt the danger line, or to cross it, have brought on verbal battles with Joe Breen.

Let it be granted that occasionally individuals—and you can include your humble writer—have got sore when his office made a ruling.

But no picture maker has ever lost the **CONFIDENCE** that Joe Breen was dealing with one as with another. He played no favorites.

They always knew that Breen spoke by logic and by the book.

They always knew that he did not make a decision because he did not like the way the other fellow parted his hair.

* * *

So why does the industry lose the services of this man to the post of some one company?

Can it be possible that the same top executives who were weeping in their wine a year ago about the loss of the foreign market, and begging the exhibitor to mortgage his home to save their stables, have become a little cocksure again?

Profit statements have kept on going up, while the foreign market may soon be limited to Greenland. Defense industries are fattening payrolls, while army camps have dragooned boys who are compelled to seek motion pictures for their brief hours of relaxation.

Has the industry—or whatever section of it that makes the decisions—decided that the moment is right to turn loose with anything and everything, from here to heckandgone, and **GET THE CASH!**

We hope not. For the sake of all of us who work in the industry and who were down so low in those years before the Legion of Decency set-up was arranged.

But it is possible that we of the industry are not even elephants. The elephant never forgets; we never remember.

We doubt if any industry paying its top executives so much money—if any do—can equal the motion picture group's record of being able to **REPEAT** on mistakes.

If you ask us to call the record we will not have to worry about getting editorial ideas for weeks to come.

DISTRIBUTORS' BATTING AVERAGE FOR 1941

		%
1. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer	15 Releases	95
2. United Artists	6 Releases	95
3. Warners-First National	13 Releases	94
4. Twentieth Century-Fox	13 Releases	90
5. Paramount	13 Releases	89
6. Universal	13 Releases	83
7. RKO-Radio	10 Releases	82
8. Columbia	9 Releases	80
9. Republic	6 Releases	71
10. Monogram	7 Releases	65

The Highlighter: **Covers the Picture News Front in a Quick Glance**

It never rains but it pours, and we are not speaking about the current California weather, which is not a fit subject for discussion, but about the happenings of the week in our fine little industry . . . News fell like bombshells across the waters . . . First, of course, there was the Joe Breen resignation, talked about on the page preceding this . . . And, of course, a flock of rumors in its wake . . . Most of our best rumor boys have Joe taking an important executive post with RKO in production . . . But we have been around so long that we never get very heated about the first flurry of rumors . . . Let's wait until we hear what a man named Breen has to say about his own plans.

BUT WHILE ON THE SUBJECT OF RADIO-RKO—

They seemed to try to hog the headlines last week . . . First, the announcement that the organization would distribute future Sam Goldwyn pictures . . . Which is money news, because Sam may not make many pictures but when he does make one he goes the limit to try and make it an attraction . . . Then, the strange news from New York that Johnny O'Connor and Fred Meyers, ace bookers, buyers, and otherwise important execs of the RKO theater system, had turned in joint resignations . . . It is hard to believe that the company would let two men go who rate at the tops in their field . . . While we don't have the pleasure of knowing Mr. Meyers, we do know Johnny O'Connor, since he started learning his job the hard way, as an exchange booker—mebbe sometimes selling posters, too,—and we have watched his career with interest because it seemed to us that every step he made over the last twenty years was always a preparation in training for the next bigger step . . . Then, out here at the studio, we find Lee Marcus, chief Keeper of the B's for the past couple of years, turning in one of those resignation slips . . . Followed closely by Bob Sisk, who has a fine associate producer record . . . It just doesn't seem to add up when you consider that this B organization at RKO has been the tryingest darn group of budget slaves in the industry for these many months, and that as a result of that trying have come up with more original ideas and surprise sleepers than more strongly bankrolled competition .

GROUP-OF-FIVE SELLING WILL SOON GET THE TEST

The calendar pages are turning, and it will not be long before the industry will be finding out whether the Government-decreed method of selling its butter and eggs is going to be workable, or whether it will creak and wheeze . . . Ned Depinet, of that same RKO organization we have been talking about above, has announced that his

company will be first in the field with its group-of-five to show to exhibitors in thirty-two exchange centers . . . (That's the law) . . . It certainly shows preparedness, and it more emphatically shows confidence and courage . . . Because Depinet will be the one to take a few things on the chin while learning lessons for the other fellows . . . But meanwhile, some of the States which were largely responsible for the new set-up, because of continuous agitation against Block Booking, are now passing legislation telling the film salesmen that they are all wrong if they obey Uncle Sam . . . It seems the exhibitors in those areas now like that ol' demon Block Booking .

LET'S TAKE A TRIP AROUND THE STUDIO NEWS FRONT

What's happened to this George Raft—that every picture seems to bring on a personal feud with fellow troupers? . . . First it was Humphrey Bogart, now it is Edward G. Robinson . . . Have they been feeding this lion on too much raw meat, or is all the rest of the profession out of step in the parade? . . . Don't get too nervous about those rumors of a Capra-Riskin division to go separate paths . . . The two are one in sincere—and the record says, very successful—collaboration . . . But there are problems involved in this producer-director-writer all package set-up which, when complicated with the tax situation, make it necessary to do some thinking . . . Take our bet: You will see plenty more Capra-Riskin annual hits . . . One of our favorite writers, Norman Krasna, and by that word "favorite" Your Highlighter always means a fellow who delivers, is involved in that "Flame of New Orleans" bust . . . The review does not say so, but we probably have the privilege of giving expression here to the thought that something must have happened between script and direction . . . Of course, the truth is, we have no right to mention such opinions about other people's business . . . But that's a failing.

STILL RIDING THE BICYCLE AROUND THE FILM FACTORIES

We like the news that George Marshall has closed a deal with RKO to start with direction of "Valley of the Sun" . . . To repeat a phrase we seem to be fond of, Marshall is another picture worker with the habit of delivering the goods . . . But sometimes he gets the good breaks, sometimes the bad ones . . . The furore created by the re-discovery of Marlene Dietrich gained him the notice he has always deserved on "Destry Rides Again" . . . Folks who knew their picture making—timing, gags, and such minor things a chap learns over years of hard work—realized what he did with "Hold That Co-Ed" for Fox . . . We don't think he is going to get the break he deserves

with "Pot O' Gold" . . . It is a craftsman's job of entertainment making, but who could take a business-like budget and live up to the glories of the James Roosevelt ballyhoo? **THAT PESKY OLD PREVIEW SITUATION IN HOLLYTOWN**

By instinct, nature, or some sort of hill-billy curse that was put upon us in our cradle, we are pretty certain to call for the loan of Paul Revere's nag when the dignity of the press is assailed . . . We may not qualify as a Minute Man, but give us Two Minutes, and a broadly spraying shot-gun, and we will stand to the cause . . . However, we think the boys of the press in Hollywood are going a trifle nutty about their preview argument . . . For the very important first reason, that both sides of the fence are occupied by NEWSPAPER MEN . . . Some are the ones who graduated to better salaries as studio publicity directors, the others are the ones who are kith and kin, and blood-brothers of the studio publicity directors . . . So, we make our first point, that the boys doing some quarreling are brothers under the skin . . . So then we come up with an humble suggestion: "Why don't the boys on both sides of the fence get together and assault the FRONT OFFICES in strong array?" . . . Then find out what it is all about, and just use a dash or two of mutual agreement and common sense to straighten the matter out . . . Our second thought is that some of the boys better be careful lest they inform those Eastern bosses too emphatically that previews do not have to be caught in Hollywood . . . It is never a very good idea to let the boss know that it is just as easy to have a home-office guy do the job as to have a distant cousin . . . It is even worse when the cousin is located in Hollywood, which, at its best, is just rated a screwy town by doddering managing editors.

ODDS AND ENDS THAT WIND UP A BUSY NEWS WEEK

Judy Canova and Republic patched up their quarrel . . . If that is important to anybody . . . Tough break for a reg'lar, Thomas Mitchell, to be a hospital visitor because he held on to the reins when the horses bolted in a scene . . . A troupier always holds on . . . Paul Malvern, one of the boys who knows how to make those action pictures move, and make them for the price, steps into a Universal berth . . . Zanuck has something in that idea of bringing Laurel and Hardy together again . . . The "something" being up his sleeve in the knowledge of what length he plans to make the pictures . . . Sad to hear about Harold Franklin's passing . . . Since his early days in Buffalo, as Shea's major-domo, Harold made friends . . . And there are a lot of us who will remember, Harold.

The Box Office: 'That Night in Rio' Sings For Big Money at the Boxoffice

Of 6 New Releases In The Past Week, 2 Ran

Over 100%, 1 Came Through Okay,

And 3 Were Very Weak

FOX—1 Release

Twentieth Century Fox's new release is Darryl F. Zanuck's big Technicolor musical extravaganza "THAT NIGHT IN RIO" which on its first bookings, the majority of which were in Holy Week, is doing very well at 135% average.

This sparkling musical co-stars two of Fox's top headliners, Alice Faye and Don Ameche, along with that popular newcomer from the New York stage, Carmen Miranda, who has gained so much in favor with her rhumbas and congas and other Latin musical numbers.

The supporting cast is headed by J. Carol Naish, and includes S. Z. Sakall, Leonid Kinsky and not forgetting Carmen Miranda's own orchestra.

Fred Kohlmar acted as associate producer to Darryl Zanuck and Irving Cummings directed. Incidentally this hit marks Irving Cummings' seventh consecutive year as a Fox director.

Due to the outstanding music and the beautiful color photography, some of which was actually filmed in Rio, plus the big exploitation campaign back of this picture and the showman-like direction of Irving Cummings, exhibitors should book "RIO" as soon as possible and give it both preferred time as well as added play dates.

WARNERS—1 Release

Warner Bros.-First National came through with another big Bette Davis hit this week in "THE GREAT LIE" which, like Bette's two recent releases, "All This and Heaven Too" and "The Letter," is another box office natural. As the majority of the bookings on the "THE GREAT LIE" include at least

6 Releases Not In The Last Issue

		%	Est.
That Night in Rio.....	FOX	135	150
The Great Lie	WAR	126	130
Sis Hopkins	REP	82	85
Power Dive	PAR	80	85
Wild Man of Borneo	MGM	74	75
Repent at Leisure	RKO	66	70

two or three days of Holy Week, this picture is only averaging 126% to date but will probably take a considerable jump in the next week or two since it is an ideal woman's picture, and will pull strong houses right down the line.

Seen opposite Miss Davis is George Brent, with Mary Astor also strongly featured. Other prominent players are Lucille Watson, Hattie McDaniel, Grant Mitchell, and Jerome Cowan.

Henry Blanke, who recently scored with "The Sea Wolf," also produced "THE GREAT LIE" under Hal Wallis' supervision with Edmund Goulding directing.

REPUBLIC—Also 1 Release

Republic's new release this week is the big expensive musical production "SIS HOPKINS," which is getting by fairly well at an 82% average, but still considerably below what the studio had expected considering the cost of the production.

The picture as a whole is very entertaining, but it is still hard to sell a feminine tomboy to American audiences. Both Mabel Norman and Martha Raye had their cycle which eventually came to an end. Mr. Yates Republic Studio is trying very hard to sell Judy Canova as the new comedienne of 1941; but so far the box office results are not any too encouraging. Miss Canova is undoubtedly very talented but would probably be better off in supporting roles than as a star.

Miss Canova has an excellent supporting cast in Bob Crosby, Charles Butterworth, Jerry Colonna and Susan Hayward.

"SIS HOPKINS" has plenty of entertainment value including many spectacular musical numbers all of which will please your audience "IF" Judy Canova's name will get them past the box office.

PARAMOUNT—1 Release

Paramount's release this week is "POWER DIVE," 80%, the first of a new series of thrilling aviation melodramas to be produced by P.C.A.—Picture Corporation of America—a newly formed company headed by William D. Thomas, formerly associate producer to Harold Hurley of Paramount. Mr. Thomas' contract calls for P.C.A. to deliver three modern aviation productions starring Richard Arlen for Paramount release.

This first, "POWER DIVE," is averaging quite satisfactorily at 80%, which includes some important first run houses. Naturally, when this one reaches the nabes it should do considerably better, especially in houses where action pictures are popular.

Jean Parker is seen opposite Mr. Arlen and the supporting cast includes Helen Mack, Roger Pryor, Don Castle and Cliff Edwards.

James Hogan very capably directed and John Rogers acted as associate producer.

MGM—1 Release

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer has a new programmer from the Joe Cohn unit this week, "THE WILD MAN OF BORNEO," 74%, which will make an average filler. Frank Morgan and Billie Burke are co-starred and the featured cast includes Mary Howard, Donald Meek, Marjorie Main and Bonita Granville. Robert Sinclair directed.

RKO—Also 1 Release

RKO-Radio Studios have only one release this week, "REPENT AT LEISURE," 66%, a rather weak programmer from the Lee Marcus unit. While this department store story is rather amusing it is lacking in marquee names and will have to be booked with a much stronger attraction.

Kent Taylor and Wendy Barrie are co-starred, Cliff Reid produced and Frank Woodruff directed.

6 FEATURES "GOING UP"

	Was	Now
Andy Hardy's Secretary.....	MGM	130 133
The Sea Wolf	WAR	116 118
Buck Privates	UNIV	103 108
Son of Monte Cristo	UA	85 87
Free and Easy	MGM	71 73
Mr. Dynamite	UNIV	68 70

7 FEATURES "GOING DOWN"

	Was	Now
Topper Returns	UA	92 88
Bad Man	MGM	90 88
Adam Had Four Sons	COL	86 84
The Penalty	MGM	80 76
Las Vegas Nights	PAR	80 76
Murder Among Friends	FOX	73 70
Flying Wild	MONO	64 62

'Great American Broadcast' Solid Entertainment

20TH CENTURY-FOX

The Digest's Box Office Estimate
120%

Associate producer Kenneth Macgowan
 Director Archie Mayo
 Original screenplay Don Ettlinger, Edwin Blum, Robert Ellis, Helen Logan
 Stars Alice Faye, Jack Oakie, John Payne, Cesar Romero
 Featured: The Four Ink Spots, James Newill, Nicholas Brothers, Wiere Brothers, Mary Beth Hughes, Eula Morgan, William Pawley, Lucien Littlefield, Edward Conrad, Gary Breckner, Mike Frankovich, John Hiestand, Eddie Acuff, Mildred Gover, Syd Saylor, Eddie Kane William Halligan, Frank Orth, Herbert Heywood.
 Photographers Leon Shamroy, Peverell Marley
 Lyrics and music Mack Gordon, Harry Warren
 Time 92 minutes

Current Reviews

We Est.

The Great American Broadcast	FOX	120
The Flame of New Orleans	UNIV.	90
The Wagons Roll at Night	WAR.	85
A Very Young Lady	FOX	75
The Devil Commands	COL.	75
The Roar of the Press	MONO.	75
The Face Behind the Mask	COL.	75
The Singing Hill	REP.	75
The Great Train Robbery	REP.	70
The Big Boss	COL.	65
Tumbledown Ranch in Arizona	MONO.	60

Without any pretensions at epic production size—aside from its grandiloquent title—"The Great American Broadcast" turns out to be one of the most satisfyingly entertaining pictures of the year, and a definite money-picture.

The title throws you off balance with its hint that the picture might be heavy history of the birth and growth of radio, or else a hodgepodge of spectacular specialties. It is not very accurate or serious history, nor is it a Technicolor jamboree. But, and emphatically, director and cast have combined for a hefty ninety minutes of darn good fun.

And if our mail means anything, that is what exhibitors can sell these days.

The picture has the basic entertainment qualities that made for the success of "Tin Pan Alley" and other Zanuck hits. With just enough plot to keep it moving, and direction by Archie Mayo that keeps the plot sugar-coated, it relies on melody and laughs to send you home happy. When you say that the melody is in the hands of Alice Faye, with able pinch-hitting assistance by John Payne, and the laughs are on the broad shoulders of Jack Oakie, you sort of sum up the picture for anyone who knows his pictures.

Alice Faye gets extra moments of singing, and does one of her best jobs. Which is about like saying that the vocal moments from Miss Faye are fine. But then you come up with the necessity of mentioning Jack Oakie, who can hog almost any scene,

and who has never seemed so much at home. About that time you remember that a very capable and personable fellow named John Payne not only does a good job holding the plot together, but he also contributes a few warbles.

It is about time we told you something about the picture. Well, it seems way back yonder when radio was an amateur nut fad, a chap named Payne got the idea that it might become a great industry if it would sell entertainment. The only entertainment he had was a neat gal friend, Alice Faye, who was willing to chirrup for nothing just to help the good cause along. The only backing he had was the none-too-bright Jack Oakie, who did, however, know something about kilowatts. And then, there is that sleek Cesar Romero, hovering in the background. It is not news to either 20th-Fox nor exhibitors that Romero is definitely one of those audience likes. He repeat here.

What happens? You can see there is a perfect gang-plank for music and entertainment, and you won't be bothered too much to know that all the boys love Alice, a knot that must be untangled before the fade-out.

Scripting must have been a tough job, trying to combine something of history with the hokum of heart interest and the values of melody, or probably the group of orchids should go to Archie Mayo and the name quartette at the top of the credit list.

After which, we are not allowed to forget some hot specialties. One is a trio, Zanuck-discovered, the Wiere Brothers. They are as refreshingly new as the first time you ever saw the Ritz Brothers—not the last time. Then there are the Four Ink Spots, who, our operatives inform us, sell quite a few of those recordings that keep people home from the theaters. They are good, and well spotted. Top that group with the Nicholas Brothers, wizards of eccentric dancing, who could work all night for our money and we would still be asking for more.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: A money picture. That about says it all. Preview April 23rd.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "Continuing the film cavalcades of American hit tunes, so successfully inaugurated with 'Alexander's Rag Time Band', 20th Century-Fox now turns attention to the story of radio's growth since the crystal sets of 1917. The result is a lively musical entertainment called 'The Great American Broadcast'—as surefire a box office sock show as has emerged from Hollywood in recent months."

VARIETY: "One of the undertakings in which 20th Century-Fox executive guidance functions best and its top players perform most brightly is the film devoted to phases of the show world. 'The Great American Broadcast' deserves to stand amongst the top rank in Darryl Zanuck's lengthening list of successful, widely entertaining features based on music and the radio. It sparkles, it has draw names, captivating music, a smart collection of specialties and sound dramatic interest, splendidly presented."

◆ THE DIGEST IS THE FACT PAPER ◆
OF THE INDUSTRY

Universal's 'Flame of New Orleans' Not So Hot

UNIVERSAL

The Digest's Box Office Estimate
90%

Producer Joseph Pasternak
Director Rene Clair
Written by Norman Krasna
Stars Marlene Dietrich

Featured: Bruce Cabot, Roland Young, Mischa Auer, Andy Devine, Frank Jenks, Eddie Quilan, Laura Hope Crews, Franklin Pangborn, Theresa Harris, Clarence Muse, Melville Cooper, Anne Revere, Bob Evans, Emily Fitzroy, Virginia Sale, Dorothy Adams, Gitta Alpar, Anthony Marlowe.

Photographer Rudy Mate
Art Director Jack Otterson
Time 78 minutes

"The Flame of New Orleans" is not such a brilliant flame. Of course, it has the advantage of one of those "hot" titles, and when you combine the title with Marlene Dietrich you have something that used to be called sex, but is now designated more modestly as glamour, you have something to sell.

But the producers gave you little more than Jack Otterson's exceptionally fine art direction, and a group of bewildered actors in search of a plot, and probably willing to sign clearance papers for the sake of a couple of lines of dialogue.

Jack Otterson did his job, the players try their best, Joe Pasternak fell down as producer when he decided this was a story, and all the folks in the executive office went boom-boom when they assigned a story that is supposedly of typical Americana to a recently arrived Gallic, Rene Clair, who probably should have been seasoned in the wood before approaching the cash customers of America. Of course, we all know that Rene Clair is the darling of the aesthetes. But those birds don't pay off at the cash windows.

It is pretty difficult to decide whether the producers actually started out with a story, or just felt satisfied to give Clair some acrobatics, while combining the alluring title with the Dietrich appeal. But about the time you figure that it is just designed to be a parade for Dietrich as a woman who always gets her man, you realize that Miss Dietrich has not been given a very well written characterization. And after that disillusioning feeling, you suddenly realize that all the other characters are walking around in a dream.

Imagine having Andy Devine, Mischa Auer, Eddie Quilan, and Frank Jenks in a picture for comedy relief—gosh, how much relief was needed—and finding those troupers playing parts that could be called "extras." Laura Hope Crewes struggles

above the background for a few more lines than the rest, but she is still left gasping.

The story is about a gal in New Orleans who starts to take a banker, hitches him to the marriage halter, and then gets in a mess of trouble. Trouble is right—we haven't figured it out yet.

Apparently, with the hypnotism of the Clair name, and that so-nice French touch, Universal set out to make a "different" picture. They sure did make it different.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: For the spots where the title, the star, and the sexy posters can sell, worth just that; elsewhere, if you must face the customers as they come out, don't get excited. Previewed April 23rd.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "Expectations of exceptional entertainment in 'The Flame of New Orleans' are due for a sharp disappointment. For a show produced by Joe Pasternak, directed by Rene Clair, written by Norman Krasna and starring Marlene Dietrich, the picture doesn't come off as anticipated."

VARIETY: "Highly romantic fluff about a not too nice lady in the early days of New Orleans. 'The Flame of New Orleans' should cut a capable swath through the hearts of the femmes who make up the larger portion of matinee audiences, mainly because of the elegance in which it is dressed and the many delightful moments that appear along its course."

'Wagons Roll at Night' Tells All Circus Stories

WARNERS

The Digest's Box Office Estimate
85%

Associate producer Harlan Thompson
Director Ray Enright
Screenplay Fred Niblo, Jr., Barry Trivers
Suggested story by Francis Wallace
Stars Humphrey Bogart, Sylvia Sidney, Eddie Albert, Joan Leslie

Featured: Sig Rumann, Cliff Clark, Charley Foy, Frank Wilcox, John Ridgely, Clara Blandick, Aldrich Bowker, Garry Owen, Jack Mower, Frank Mayo.

Photographer Sid Hickox
Time 84 minutes

About every circus picture that has been made, from "Polly of the Circus," through a by-path to "Variety," and a slight detour to Clyde Beatty's Universal lion picture, and stumbling on the heels of "Chad Hanna," can take a share of pride in "The Wagons Roll at Night." They have all contributed. In fact, they were too generous with their contributions, to the extent that an eighty-four minute meller becomes so troubled in unravelling its plot that you feel you have sat through a minimum of two hours.

Which is not to say that the picture will not have its welcome spots. Provided they do not charge you too much, or you do not

date it on the critical nights. There is always a safe value in circus flamboyancy, there is always a thrill to see the fellow who goes into the cage with the lions.

And then there are other meat stock ingredients in the soup—the country boy who becomes a champ lion teaser, the semi-siren of the circus who might almost win him except that no well-trained audience will ever expect that she will win, there is the gal of rustic purity sublime for whom, god darn it, we are rooting. And there's a villain. Humphrey Bogart tops the credit list, and tries to play this part, but he is the most wierdly drawn character—in an attempt to get a drop of sympathy while getting a ton of menace—that we have seen in some time.

It's a corny job for corny customers—and in that bracket may satisfy.

Top honors, as we have mentioned, go to Humphrey Bogart, but the piece is held together by the ingratiating personality of Eddie Albert. He makes it almost human, even if the script tries its darndest to make him sub-dumb. Sylvia Sidney troupes with trouper skill through her siren role. That little known gal, Joan Leslie, is a name to write down in the book. The kid is good. Cliff Clark, Sig Rumann, Clara Blandick

and Charley Foy turn in good jobs.

For that matter all concerned seem to have been hitting on high, and that includes, with emphasis, Director Ray Enright. He cellophanes the job so that there are a dozen moments when you feel that it is going to become a picture. But the plot has a perfect telegraph system that always tells you too far in advance just what will happen, so that even players and director can't help you muttering sotto-voice. "I wish it would happen and be over with."

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: At a budget price booking has meller values and color above B grade for the audiences that want this sort; for the critical just one of those things. Previewed April 22nd.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "Warners has a high-powered sales organization capable of impressively rolling 'The Wagons' out to cop box office coin. While the attraction falls short of being completely satisfactory entertainment, its cast is headed by sound marquee names."

VARIETY: "Avoiding the pitfalls encouraged in numerous predecessor films dealing with circus life, 'The Wagons Roll at Night' tells an absorbing, standard melodrama of big top and corny folk focused upon the handling of a dangerous lion act."

T H E H O N O R B O X W I



Alice Faye

' ' T H A T N I G H T

20
CENTURY
FOX

INNER OF THE WEEK



Don Ameche

Management
GEORGE FRANK, INC.

IT IN RIO "

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RY
K



▶ ONE PAPER

in Hollywood

TALKS FACTS

▶ MANY PAPERS

in Hollywood

JUGGLE WORDS

▶ *Box Office*

DIGEST

is the FACT paper

'Face Behind the Mask' Possible B Sleeper

(Columbia)

The Digest's Box Office Estimate
75%

Producer Wallace MacDonald
Director Robert Florey
Screenplay Allen Vincent, Paul Jarrico
Story Arthur Levinson
From radio play by Thomas Edward O'Connell
Stars Peter Lorre

Featured: Evelyn Keyes, Don Beddoe, George E. Stone, John Tyrell, Stanley Brown, Al Seymour, James Seay, Warren Ashe, Charles Wilson, George McKay.
Photographer Franz F. Planer

Another one of those Columbia pictures that has been playing around the country plenty before being given to the tender Peter Lorre name, but there is some . . . And there is no doubt about him as an actor . . . So take that fact and add the item that Robert Florey has given it A direction, that the cast is a neatly selected group of troupers . . . Story, from an original by Arthur Levinson, has Lorre, who is a man figuratively and literally behind a mask because his face has been terribly distorted by fire, and who must fight his way back . . .

George E. Stone stands out in the generally excellent supporting cast. mercies of the critics . . . They made a mistake this time though, because it is close to being a sleeper in the small budget group . . . There isn't much selling value in the

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "Something of a surprise package as supporting fare is Columbia's unsung and unheralded 'The Face Behind the Mask'. A lot of movie-goers are due to discover this little show for themselves and wonder why Hollywood failed to make more to-do about it."

'Very Young Lady' Mainly for the Kiddies

20TH CENTURY-FOX

The Digest's Box Office Estimate
75%

Associate producer Robert T. Kane
Director Harold Schuster
Screenplay Ladislav Fedor, Elain Ryan
Original play Ladislav Fedor
Star Jane Withers
Featured: Nancy Kelly, John Sutton, Janet Beecher, Richard Clayton, June Carlson, Charles Halton, Cecil Kellaway, Marilyn Kinsley, Jo Ann Ransom, Catherine Henderson, Lucita Ham, June Horne.
Photographer Edward Cronjager
Time 80 minutes

Twentieth's "A Very Young Lady" is very young in appeal. Made once before as "Girl's Dormitory" with Simone Simon, it

now turns out as a merger of the three Deanna Durbin formulae to serve Jane Withers. It falls into its own classification without the necessity of comment.

You will pretty well know the plot when we tell you the springboard. Jane, at a classy finishing school, gets an adolescent crush for one of her professors. Oh, you have heard it before? Well, we won't take up your time.

The picture has a good cast, and excellent production values. In addition to Jane Withers turning on all the zip that she possesses, the supporting roles as can be seen from the cast list above, are in tried and true hands. Production values are good.

But it sums up as 1929 saccharine, which is a way of saying that sugar is always

sweet to taste but it doesn't hold up as well as a piece of steak.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: Just a kiddie filler. Previewed April 22nd.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "'A Very Young Lady' is a very slight story. It remains to be seen how Jane Withers fans, accustomed to considerably more robust fare, will accept this offering."

VARIETY: "A human little drama of engaged girls and their romantic leanings which will be recognized by all parents with such a youngster in their homes. 'A Very Young Lady' gives 20th Century-Fox an opportunity to further advance Jane Withers along her maturing career and jump from the tomboyish stage into the 'growing up' phase."

'The Great Train Robbery' Unique Western

(Republic)

The Digest's Box Office Estimate
70%

Producer-director Joseph Kane
Original screenplay Olive Cooper, Garnet Weston, Robert T. Shannon
Featured: Bob Steele, Claire Carleton, Milburn Stone, Helen MacKellar, Si Jenks, Monte Blue, Hal Taliaferro, George Guhl, Jay Novello, Dick Wessel, Yakima Canutt, Lew Kelly, Guy Usher.
Photographer Reggie Lanning
Time 59 minutes

This is a freak from Republic which a number of the company's customers have already discovered to be a moneymaker in its bracket . . . There is something about the title, for one thing, that sells; there is a story that has enough of the railroading to live up to the title, but the sure framework of a fast-paced Western with its touch of mystery . . . The title is probably doing most of the selling, since almost everybody who ever read a picture columnist in the past twenty years has heard about the industry's birth with Thomas Edison's "Great Train

Robbery" . . . But don't take anything away from the writers, director, and players who make it stand up . . . Strictly a freak—but what a great title for a freak.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "Republic slipped this one out into the market without preview or fanfare, since which astounded Republic exchange men have been sweating to keep pace with the call for bookings for the step-child."

VARIETY: "'The Great Train Robbery' fills the bill for thrills and will be especially to the liking of juvenile audiences."

FOR REVIEWS
THAT SAY
SOMETHING

Box
Office
Digest

BRIEF REVIEWS

"TUMBLEDOWN RANCH IN ARIZONA"

GEORGE WEEKS - MONOGRAM
The Digest's Box Office Estimate
60%

Producer George Weeks
Director Roy Luby
Story by Milton Raison

Featured: Ray Corrigan, John King, Max Terhune, Sheila Darcy, Marian Kerby, Quen Ramsey, James Craven, John Elliott, Jack Holmes, Steve Clark, Sam Bernard.

Photographer Robert Cline
Time 60 minutes

At the price you are probably paying for this George Weeks Western series released through Monogram you are most likely getting more than your money's worth . . . This is not one of the top numbers of the series, but Producer Weeks has a safe formula in the "Three Musketeer" angle, he paces his pictures to the satisfaction of the action audiences . . . The story tries too hard this time, which may let it down a bit in the kiddie audience appreciation . . . Plot is a sort of rodeo versioned "Yankee in King Arthur's Court" which throws a cowpuncher back a couple of decades . . . They will either like the novelty or they will wonder what it is all about.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "George Weeks' 'Range Busters' keep right on riding along. 'Tumbledown Ranch in Arizona' is the sixth screen adventure for the intrepid dare-devils, and it should do all right for itself when it hits the action market for which it was made."

VARIETY: "Sixth in the Range Busters series, this is a trivial little western strictly for the juve trade."

"ROAR OF THE PRESS"

(Monogram)
The Digest's Box Office Estimate
75%

Producer Scott R. Dunlap
Director Phil Rosen
Screenplay Albert Duffy
Original Alfred Block
Stars Jean Parker, Wallace Ford

Featured: Jed Prouty, Suzanne Kaaren, Harland Tucker, Evalyn Knapp, Robert Frazer, Dorothy Lee, John Holland, Maxine Leslie, Paul Fox, Betty Compson, Matty Fain, Eddie Foster, Charles King, Frank O'Connor, Dennis Moore, Robert Pittard.

Photographer Harry Neumann
Time 72 minutes

This is a dandy picture that should have been allowed more budget money and more time in the shooting . . . Because direction, story and scripting, and casting are all on the A side . . . And don't think that we are apologizing for the budget and the time, because the entertainment values are there regardless of the adding machines . . . It is a newspaper yarn, with Wallace Ford in the center spot as a reporter whose honeymoon is interrupted by a murder . . . What else

could a reporter do but follow the trail? . . . Newspaper stories have a difficult time presenting anything new, but Rosen's direction, a top performance by Ford, and an intelligently written script, give this the right touch, and give Monogram customers a bargain buy.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "One of the more ambitious offerings from Monogram, 'Roar of the Press', has been carefully produced by Scott Dunlap and comes off as a zesty, believable newspaper yarn."

VARIETY: "Fine acting by Wallace Ford in a newspaper story that has a fresh slant and plenty of action ought to give 'Roar of the Press' a good chance at first run bookings and, most certainly, a warm reception from fans in the secondary spots. Scott R. Dunlap, who produced, and Phil Rosen, who directed, rate cheers for their effective work."

"THE DEVIL'S COMMAND"

(Columbia)
The Digest's Box Office Estimate
75%

Director Edward Dmytryk
Screenplay Robert D. Andrews, Milton Gunzburg
Original William Sloane
Star Boris Karloff

Featured: Richard Friske, Amanda Duff, Anne Revere, Ralph Penney, Dorothy Adams, Walter Baldwin, Kenneth MacDonald, Shirley Warde.

Photographer Allen G. Siegler
Time 65 minutes

There must be more theaters in the United States selling horror than are selling clean fun . . . This one falls in the category of pictures made for those houses . . . It is not quite as good as Universal's knowledge of the formula, but who ever knows what will get by with these horror fanatics? . . . Don't be surprised to learn that the story concerns another doctor, that the medico is Boris Karloff . . . We wonder when the American Medical Association will get around to passing resolutions about the dirty double lives all these doctors lead on the screen.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "For those who insist upon being scared when seeking entertainment, Columbia offers 'The Devil Commands', a moderately terrifying item that doesn't succeed in making much sense."

VARIETY: "'The Devil Commands' is not for the kiddies. For almost an hour a mood of expectancy, of something terrifying and cosmically important that is about to happen, is created by the sustained suspense of this Boris Karloff goose-flesher. Of its kind, the picture qualifies as adequate entertainment."

"THE BIG BOSS"

(Columbia)
The Digest's Box Office Estimate
70%

Director Charles Barton
Original screenplay Howard J. Green

Photographer Benjamin Kline

Featured: Otto Kruger, Gloria Dickson, John Littel, Don Beddoe, Robert Fiske, George Lessey, Joe Conti.

A program filler on the gangster style that has already played out most of its play-dates before giving Hollywood a chance to see it. It probably won't have many more play-dates to worry about except where they buy at footage prices . . . They put politics, gangsterism, "The Last Mile," together, along with the long-lost brother of the Governor, who has the fatal decision in his hands, and it comes out just as messy as our description.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "Melodramatic fiction with a political background, the plot of 'The Big Boss' never rings true, and the picture cannot hope to rise above secondary program billing in subsequent runs."

VARIETY: "'The Big Boss' comes off as conventional but acceptable program entry for the general runs because of good performance and capable direction."

"THE SINGING HILL"

(Republic)
The Digest's Box Office Estimate
75%

Associate producer Harry Grey
Director Lew Landers
Screenplay Olive Cooper
Original Jesse Lasky Jr., Richard Murphy
Stars Gene Autry

Featured: Smiley Burnette, Virginia Dale, Mary Lee, Spencer Charters, Gerald Olivier Smith, George Meeker, Wade Boteler, Harry Stuffs, Cactus Mack, Jack Kirk.

Photographer William Nobles
Time 73 minutes

A pretty good number in the Gene Autry perennials . . . We have found familiarity with the names of all these mentioned in the credit list on the writing chores, we have seen plenty of director Lew Landers' work, and when you add Gene and Smiley, along with a capable production effort by Harry Grey, it sort of sums it all up . . . It's all about those unfortunate ranchers who are always in trouble—either with rustlers, or over-greedy cattle lords, or with bankers. This time it is the bankers. But don't worry, Gene straightens everything out.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "Still leading Western stars by a number of notches in popularity, Gene Autry deserves the increased care of handling his productions, here so ably demonstrated by Associate Producer Harry Grey."

VARIETY: "About as fine a Gene Autry musical Western as any Republic has ever produced is 'The Singing Hill'. The film has been given excellent production, a swell feminine lead, smooth direction, and five grand new songs. There can be little doubt that this one will assay high at the box office."

This Year **THE EXHIBITOR** *Buys!*

IT WAS THE CUSTOM THAT HE WAS JUST SOLD!
BUT THE GOVERNMENT HAS SAID THAT HE
DOESN'T HAVE TO BUY HIS BANANAS IN A BUNCH
HEREAFTER, BUT CAN PICK FIVE OF THE PIECES
OF FRUIT THAT HE DESIRES.

WHICH ALSO MEANS —

THAT THE EXHIBITOR IS MORE THAN EVER
INTERESTED IN THE STRAIGHT - FROM - THE -
SHOULDER REVIEWS, AND THE BOX OFFICE
FACTS THAT HE GETS FROM ONLY ONE SOURCE—

BOX OFFICE DIGEST

This is the DIGEST'S Year!



THE BATTING AVERAGES

1941

Producers and Associate Producers

	Pictures	%
Joseph Mankiewicz	1	181
David Hempstead	1	143
Paul Jones	2	141
John Considine	1	136
Harry Joe Brown	1	132
Bruce Manning	1	126
William Perlberg	1	125
William Cagney	1	124
Joseph Pasternak	1	120
Fred Kohlmar	2	110
Mark Hellinger	1	110
Alex Gottlieb	1	108
Henry Blanke	3	107
Kenneth Macgowan	1	103
J. Walter Ruben	2	100

Producer-Directors

	Pictures	%
Frank Capra	1	162
Alexander Korda	1	133
E. H. Griffith	1	120
Clarence Brown	1	107

Actresses

	Pictures	%
Ginger Rogers	1	143
Barbara Stanwyck	2	142
Alice Faye	1	135
Vivien Leigh	1	133
Bette Davis	1	126
Rosalind Russell	1	125
Olivia de Havilland	1	124
Deanna Durbin	1	120
Madeleine Carroll	1	120
Carole Lombard	1	118
Ida Lupino	1	110
Hedy Lamarr	1	107
Margaret Sullavan	2	106



Directors

	Pictures	%
George Cukor	1	181
Victor Schertzinger	1	161
Sam Wood	1	143
John Ford	1	138
Norman Taurog	1	136
Irving Cummings	1	135
George B. Seitz	1	133
Fritz Lang	1	132
Robert Stevenson	1	128
Edmund Goulding	1	126
Al Hall	1	125
William Seiter	1	120
Preston Sturges	1	120
Alfred Hitchcock	1	118
Michael Curtiz	1	118
Raoul Walsh	2	117
Frank Borzage	1	115
Irving Pichel	1	103

Actors

	Pictures	%
Cary Grant	1	181
Gary Cooper	1	162
Bing Crosby	1	161
Bob Hope	1	161
James Stewart	2	144
Spencer Tracy	1	136
Don Ameche	1	135
Mickey Rooney	2	135
Laurence Olivier	1	133
Randolph Scott	1	132
Charles Boyer	1	126
James Cagney	1	124
Fred MacMurray	1	120
Henry Fonda	1	120
Edward G. Robinson	1	118
Robert Taylor	1	115
Humphrey Bogart	1	110
Abbott and Costello	1	108
Paul Muni	1	103
Robert Young	2	102



All Major Features Released in 1941

A

OVER \$500,000

Philadelphia Story	MGM	181
Meet John Doe	WAR	162
Road to Zanzibar	PAR	161
Kitty Foyle	RKO	143
Tobacco Road	FOX	138
Men of Boys Town	MGM	176
That Night in Rio	FOX	135
That Hamilton Woman	UA	133
Western Union	FOX	132
The Great Lie	WAR	126
Back Street	UNIV	126
Strawberry Blonde	WAR	124
Lady Eve	PAR	120
Nice Girl?	UNIV	120
Virginia	PAR	120
Mr. and Mrs. Smith	RKO	118
The Sea Wolf	WAR	118
Flight Command	MGM	115
Come Live With Me	MGM	107
Hudson's Bay	FOX	103

Son of Monte Cristo	UA	87
So Ends Our Night	UA	85
Victory	PAR	82

B

FROM \$200,000 TO \$500,000

Andy Hardy's Private Secretary	MGM	133
This Thing Called Love	COL	125
High Sierra	WAR	110

Cheers for Miss Bishop	UA	92
Topper Returns	UA	88
Bad Man	MGM	88
Footsteps in the Dark	WAR	88
A Girl, a Guy and a Gob	RKO	87
Mad Doctor	PAR	87
Tall Dark and Handsome	FOX	86
Maisie Was a Lady	MGM	85
Adam Had Four Sons	COL	84
Sis Hopkins	REP	82
Texas Rangers Ride Again	PAR	78
Invisible Woman	UNIV	78
Three on a Honeymoon	WAR	77
Round Up	PAR	77
The Penalty	MGM	76
Las Vegas Nights	PAR	76
Fight from Destiny	WAR	76
You're the One	PAR	75
Wild Man of Borneo	MGM	74
Man Who Lost Himself	UNIV	74
Romance of the Rio Grande	FOX	73
Blonde Inspiration	MGM	73
Rage in Heaven	MGM	72
Life with Henry	PAR	72
Golden Hoofs	FOX	72
Mad Show	UA	71
Keeping Company	MGM	71
Murder Among Friends	FOX	70

Hard Boiled Canary	PAR	63
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C

FROM \$100,000 TO \$200,000

Buck Privates	UNIV	108
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Blondie Goes Latin	COL	81
Six Lessons from Madame LaZonga	UNIV	80
Elery Queen, Master Detective	COL	80
Elery Queen Penthouse Mystery	COL	78
Face Behind The Mask	COL	73
Free and Easy	MGM	73
Scotland Yard	FOX	72
Phantom Submarine	COL	72
Play Girl	RKO	72
Trial of Mary Dugan	MGM	72
Devil Commands	COL	72
A Dangerous Game	UNIV	72
Ride, Kelly, Ride	FOX	71
Girl in the News	COL	71
Sleepers West	FOX	70
Great Mr. Nobody	WAR	70
The Monster and the Girl	PAR	70
Lucky Devils	UNIV	70
Where Did You Get That Girl	UNIV	70
Convoy	RKO	70
She Couldn't Say No	WAR	70
Michael Shayne, Private Detective	FOX	70
The Case of the Black Parrot	WAR	70
Man Made Monster	UNIV	70
Mr. Dynamite	UNIV	70

Let's Make Music	RKO	68
Meet the Chump	UNIV	68
Knockout	WAR	68
Saint in Palm Springs	RKO	67
Father's Son	WAR	67
Reptant at Leisure	RKO	66
Shadow on the Stairs	WAR	64
Scattergood Baines	RKO	64

D

BELOW \$100,000

Power Dive	PAR	78
Land of Liberty	MGM	70
Barnyard Follies	REP	69
Sign of the Wolf	MONO	68
Bowery Boy	REP	68
Petticoat Politics	REP	68
Phantom of Chinatown	MONO	67
Arkansas Judge	REP	67
Chamber of Horrors	MONO	65
Footlight Fever	RKO	64
Pride of the Bowery	MONO	63
Flying Wild	MONO	62
Her First Romance	MONO	62
You're Out of Luck	MONO	62
The Old Swimming Hole	MONO	60

What Happened

THIS WEEK ?

The Week's Best Laugh . . .

And, strange as it seems to critical ears, it was not a subtle situation, but just one for healthy human roars . . . In the old vulgar days they used to call them "belly-laughs" . . . It came when Jack Oakie, in long underwear, prances around his bedroom singing "Give My Regards to Broadway" . . . By the way, did anyone else ever think of what a George M. Cohan the screen would get from Jack Oakie, even though he may be physically considerably too robust?

The Week's Disappointment .

When Joe Pasternak, Marlene Dietrich, and Norman Krasna can get together on a job and come out with nothing more than the non-inflammable "Flame of New Orleans." . . . But, maybe bigger than that disappointment, the realization that the picture was directed by Rene Clair, French director, who has been touted by our intelligencia as the guy from whom American directors should take lessons . . . Possibly we expected too much . . . But the picture shows that the next time someone should count up the marbles—and call off the fancy premieres—before setting the release date.

The Week's Happy Occurrence

This kid, Joan Leslie, who is seen in Warner's "The Wagons Roll at Night" . . . The youngster has not only the fresh wholesomeness of a real American girl to greet your eyes, but in every inch of celluloid shows trouping skill . . . She sparkles every scene in which she appears, and they are all opposite veteran troupers, and most in those tough two-shot close-ups . . . We don't know the cute girl, but we will give her a wish: "Never let them call you an oomph girl, or a replica of some other star . . . Keep along the pathway you are trodding and that path has a sign saying 'Going Places'."

The Week's Best Alibi . . .

Do you remember all the fanfare about the four—or was it forty-four, or only two or three—sound tracks that brought "Fantasia" to a supposed to be startled world? . . . And do you know enough about addition to total the amount of billboard space, LIFE and TIME spreads, gurgles and whoopees that were disgorged about that phenomenon of science? . . . Now that it turns out to be necessary to let the lowly ordinary exhibitor show the picture so that some money can come back to the coffers—what is the statement? . . . Those same marvelous engineers have found a way to give you the same result on one track for cash paying customers . . . Sounds as though those fellows could make omelets without eggs.

Box Office

DIGEST

VOLUME 12, NO. 23

54

HOLLYWOOD, CALIF., MAY 15, 1941

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*The Box Office
Reports:*

'Ziegfeld Girl' Wins This Week

See Page 5

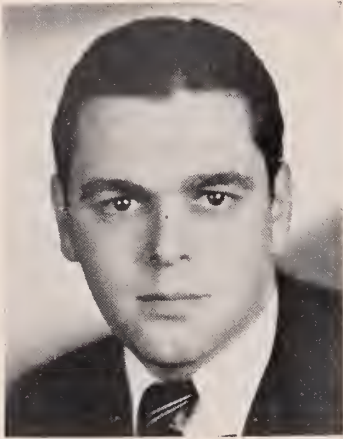
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The Box Office

DIGEST "HONOR BOX"

The Biggest Grossing Release Of The Past Week

**This Week MGM wins with
"THE ZIEGFELD GIRL" 148%**



Producer
PANDRO S. BERMAN

Screenplay
MARGUERITE ROBERTS
SONYA LEVIEN

Original Story by
WILLIAM A. McGUIRE

Photographer
RAY JUNE

Musical Numbers Directed by
BUSBY BERKELEY



Director
ROBERT Z. LEONARD



JUDY GARLAND



JAMES STEWART



LANA TURNER



HEDY LAMARR



CHARLES WINNINGER

Featured
TONY MARTIN
IAN HUNTER
EDWARD EVERETT HORTON
PHILIP DORN
PAUL KELLY
EVE ARDEN
DAN DAILEY, JR.
AL SHEAN
FAY HOLDEN
FELIX BRESSART
ROSE HOBART
BERNARD NEDELL
ED MCNAMARA



JACKIE COOPER

The Box Office DIGEST

*The Industry's
Distinctive Weekly*

DIAGNOSIS

An Editorial by **ROBERT E. WELSH**

Last week we remarked in our rumbling manner that the industry should not be surprised that theater business is falling off when the nation has lifted a million or so boys of the ticket-buying age from their home communities and transplanted them to inaccessible camps to live the life of military monks while awaiting occasional brief periods of liberty.

We also had some thoughts about the fact that the girl friends back home, for whom these movie customers used to pay the freight, may be sitting home in too great numbers at the free radio.

And the additional fact—that the new money from defense expenditures is going two ways: The youngsters are putting it into jalopies and the brew of hops and malt, and the oldsters into paying their debts.

But those factual arguments do not absolve Hollywood from all blame in connection with the falling blood pressure of box offices.

* * *

We will hazard a few guesses at other reasons for the anemia. And these suggestions are made in the face of the fact that the current run of picture offerings is hitting a pretty good average of entertainment value.

We will nominate for the first point in our diagnosis:

The industry has again gone CYCLE crazy. And for a horrible example we will cite you—and, if you care, show some letters from exhibitors—the cycle of screwball marriage farces.

The peculiar part about it is that most of the current marital argument pictures are pretty good entertainment. But so is caviar as an appetizer. So too, at various times are oysters, olives, crepes suzette, and even corned beef. But who in the heck wants to approach the dining table for every meal getting any one of those same things every time?

If you will talk to some of the circuit bookers for big chains, the ones who try to use judgment in routing pictures around the wheel, you will hear their problems in trying to separate two or three good married squabble pictures by at least a week or so in order to give the customers something between their hors-d'orves of caviar and a dessert

of caviar. The booker's problem is to try and hold tight to that Mr. and Mrs. Smith—maybe with a kid or two—who attend the picture theater twice a week with the force of ingrained habit.

But how can the booker nourish the habit if cycles hit him below the belt, and all of a sudden he must be feeding the same food too often to the same customers?

Mr. and Mrs. Smith have the right to get tired of the man, the wife, the bedroom, the imminent divorce, or strange married-in-name-only" situation.

The folks in Hollywood who make the pictures would too, if they had to pay cash for the same thing several times a month.

* * *

The marriage cycle is just a current example. Many more could be mentioned, as they always could every couple of years or so in this industry's history. We've had the gangsters, the pseudo patriotic epics, the discovery of famous men of science and invention, the wave of propaganda films.

But there is another reason, of less importance, that is not helping the ticket-taker just now.

The companies are not using intelligence in their release date spotting of free lance stars and intra-studio borrowed luminaries.

The pictures may be produced months apart, but all too often nowadays, by the time the official release dates place them on the booker's shelf he is asked to be a Houdini to keep a star from competing with himself—or herself.

That isn't good business. It isn't even good sense.

The exhibitor has bought two or three programs in bulk at the start of the season. Most of them were just titles, a few named stars. But when he gets his notice from the exchange that the picture is available for booking he suddenly recalls that

another exchange notified him early that morning of the availability of a picture with the same star.

It seems to an humble editor that major companies with very important investments in pieces of product could talk these things over with each other, and do a little spacing of release dates.

For their own sakes, for that of the exhibitor, and for a little fairness to the stars involved.

DISTRIBUTORS' BATTING AVERAGE FOR 1941

		%
1. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer	17 Releases	96
2. United Artists	8 Releases	95
3. Twentieth Century-Fox	14 Releases	90
4. Warners-First National	16 Releases	88
5. Paramount	13 Releases	88
6. Universal	18 Releases	82
7. RKO-Radio	13 Releases	82
8. Columbia	12 Releases	77
9. Republic	7 Releases	70
10. Monogram	9 Releases	63

The Highlighter: **Covers the Picture News Front in a Quick Glance**

News Highlight of the week in which there were plenty of interesting items was undoubtedly confirmation of the appointment of our recently retired chaperon, Joe Breen, to the important post of General Manager at the RKO-Radio studios. . . . Specific titles do not mean so much in an industry such as this—which has so many hair-splitting ones—but we guess the one bestowed on Breen will do just as well until another one comes along. . . And that will be as soon as the Board of Directors meet to name him a vice-president. . . But what's a title or two, or three or four when it is the importance of the job that counts? . . . RKO is definitely on the road towards unit production, with individual responsibility for individual pictures. . . A combing of the market for top attractions, an intensifying of responsibility for the moderate budget pictures on proven individuals. . . Essentially that means a lot of separate companies operating under a single roof and a single trademark. . . It calls for a man at the top who is a co-ordinator, who has the confidence of all whose work will merge into one whole for the company's sake. . . George Schaefer made no mistake in picking his man. . . Joe Breen has that cooperating ability, he holds that confidence of all with whom he comes in contact. . . Both in his intelligence and his integrity.

RANDOM THOUGHTS ABOUT BUSY HOLLYWOOD WEEK

Well, the boys have had to call in Old Doc Freeman, the medico from Gawgia, suh, to try and straighten out the local preview muddle. . . If anyone can do it, Y. Frank Freeman is probably the man. . . And it is about time that some definite course was decided upon. . . The twists and turns of the few weeks have been on the edge of the journeys to here, there and hellangone to catch up with the pictures, more companies slipping weak sisters out into general Eastern release without previewing because of lack of faith in their product, doubling up of fairly important previews on the same night, one headache after another. . . As head of the Producers the Paramount chieftain will now try to iron it out. . . The jury is still out on the box office fate of "Citizen Kane," judging from our early reports—too few to guess at the verdict. . . If you were to take the New York figures alone the picture could be rated at around 200%, but there are scattered precincts around the country where all is not so well on the Welles front. . . Well, to say it again, "Citizen Kane" was one of the few pictures in the

course of five years on which Box Office Digest gave its estimate as a large interrogation point—? . . . We still think we had the best answer. . . One of the many evils of war is the fact that just now the producers seem to be kidding themselves that the public's mind is so occupied with war that they are running wilder and wilder in the tendency for near-smut that masquerades in Hollywood as "sophistication." . . They'd better not deceive themselves. . . The danger signals will soon be hoisted. . .

DE SYLVA GOING TO TOWN ON "LOUISIANA PURCHASE"

That most valuable piece of box office property, "Louisiana Purchase" gets nearer and nearer to the starting gate. . . Buddy DeSylva, producer of the Broadway stage sensation, and now Paramount production chief, must have gotten a squint at "That Night in Rio" and rushed out of the office with pen in hand and dotted line trailing behind to nab Irving Cummings as director. . . And he has done right well for himself, too. . . "Louisiana Purchase" is definitely of the stage, created for the stage. . . To maintain the strength of that "Broadway theater" feeling in transference to the screen has not always been easy, or successful. . . "That Night in Rio," while not stemming from the stage, was pretty evidently conceived at achieving the same object that the \$4.40 Times Square musical does—an old round delightful couple of hours, and let plot whirl where it may. . . Cummings has the touch. . . His deal with Paramount covers the one picture outside commitment he is able to make under his long-term Zanuck tie-up.

RAMBLING HERE AND THERE AROUND THE STUDIOS

Quite a number of shifts and deals this past week. . . Wes Ruggles closes to direct one at MGM, which gives good promise since the atmosphere will be so different he may be able to forget his griefs in bringing "Arizona" to the screen for Cohn. . . Out in Culver City also Norman McLeod signs a term with MGM, and there are hints that he may get that prize assignment "Panama Hattie" . . . Rumor has it that Howard Hughes may revive his shelved script on "Queer People," with Leo McCarey at the helm. . . Remember what a furore that yarn caused a decade or so ago? . . . Shucks, the industry has learned a lot more about how to "take it" since those days. . . We are our own best ribbers now. . . Vic Shapiro, capable veteran of the publicity and advertising fields, both in home office and studio, starts an independent organization, with the Screen Writer's Guild for Number One client. . . Twentieth is stepping up Cesar

Romero to definite A classification, and from all we hear the move is more than justified by his growing fan following. . . When a feller can gain a following out of some of those B's, that's sumpin'.

IT'S NOT ALWAYS SUCH A SCREWY BUSINESS

Something happened out here in Hollywood last week which gives some evidence that this industry is not always on the screwball side. . . After seven years of delivering the goods at one studio—and seven years is seven times seven in this industry for one job—a writer was advanced a step to producer classification. . . Usually the rewards go to the fellows who hop around opportunely from one studio to another, with the capable, consistent, and loyal workers being forgotten in the shuffle. . . RKO is the studio that did the deed last week, and John Twist the writer. . . It would take a column of this more or less valuable space to list all the fine jobs Twist has done for RKO in those seven years, both originals and collaborations. . . Mostly buried in the life-saving job of doing something intelligent and unusual for B budget production values he has consistently come up with surprise after surprise each year. . . Twist's first production will be "Four Jacks and a Queen" from his own original and screenplay. . . Incidentally, there is another writer veteran on that RKO list whose record should be checked by the higher ups. . . Jerry Cady is the name. . . You're welcome; good advice given at all hours.



ONE TYPE OF PRODUCT DOING NO COMPLAINING

There is one type of merchandise offered by this industry which goes on and on through the years—serials—and always holds its head up with a profitable smirk for producer, distributor and exhibitor. . . This was borne in on us again last week when we journeyed to Film Row in Los Angeles and heard the raves of Columbia exchange workers over "The Spider Returns," which is Larry Damour's latest contribution to the program. . . The Cohn organization is so hot that Darmour went out on the limb with a wad of dough to buy screen rights to the popular radio serial, "Captain Midnight". . . It has often proved a lucky thing for this up-and-down business that some companies had some bread winners like serials and Western heroes. . . And when you think of the number of years that Darmour and Columbia have been associated the importance begins to dawn on you.



The Box Office: MGM's 'Ziegfeld Girl' Tops; Boxoffices Still Far Off

Of 12 New Releases In The Past Week, One Ran Over 100%, Five Came Through Okay, And Six Were Very Weak

EDITOR'S NOTE: With the arrival of Easter a month ago and the conclusion of the Lenten Season, exhibitors were looking forward to a big pick-up in business. But the exact opposite has taken place with box offices falling off nationally from 15% to 25%—and all this in spite of the money being spent on national defense.

Naturally most exhibitors are quite alarmed over the situation; we are only bringing this fact to the attention of our Hollywood readers, particularly producers, directors and stars, as the current figures we are receiving are below par. We believe that the figures on such pictures as "That Night In Rio," "Men of Boys Town," "Back Street," "The Great Lie," "Nice Girl," and "The Devil and Miss Jones" would be much higher if conditions were normal; so if you think your picture is running below par, look at the other fellow's and you will note that all pictures, even with the biggest of star names, are away below normal.

MGM—2 Releases

MGM's top release this week is "THE ZIEGFELD GIRL," 148%, which is the Honor Box Winner. While this makes "THE ZIEGFELD GIRL" the fourth biggest release of the year, still 148% is not any too strong considering the fact that "The Great Ziegfeld" ran considerably above 200% on practically all its bookings. Of course, this picture with its excellent marquee title and fine studded cast, is bound to pull good business in all type of houses; still if conditions were normal it would probably be pulling considerably higher and getting longer extended runs.

James Stewart, Judy Garland, Lana Turner are co-starred and the featured cast is headed by Tony Martin, Jackie Cooper, Ian Hunter, Edward Everett Horton and Charles Winninger. Pan Berman produced this big Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer special and Robert Leonard, who directed the original "Ziegfeld," also directed this one.

It has been the opinion of many of the critics as well as leading exhibitors that if this big super-special had been filmed in Technicolor that it would have enhanced the box office value considerably.

MGM's second release is another of the Joe Cohn-Carey Wilson "Dr. Kildare" series—"THE PEOPLE VS. DOCTOR KIL-

12 New Releases Not In The Last Issue

		%	Est.
Ziegfeld Girl	MGM	148	150
That Uncertain Feeling	UA	97	110
Flame of New Orleans	UNIV	87	90
Wagons Roll At Night	WAR	83	85
The People vs. Dr. Kildare	MGM	80	75
Model Wife	UNIV	80	90
They Met In Argentina	RKO	73	—
Black Cat	UNIV	72	75
Mutiny in the Arctic	UNIV	70	75
Dead Men Tell	FOX	70	75
Roar of the Press	MONO	70	75
Strange Alibi	WAR	66	65

DARE," which on its first bookings is averaging 80%, a little better than the last "Dr. Kildare."

As usual Lew Ayres, Lionel Barrymore and Laraine Day head the cast and the featured players include Bonita Granville, Alma Kruger and Diana Lewis. Harold Bucquet continues as director of this series.

U.A.—1 Release

United Artist's only new release this week is the new Sol Lessor production, "THAT UNCERTAIN FEELING," starring Merle Oberon and Melvyn Douglas and it is doing fairly well at a 97% average; much better than Mr. Lessor's last United Artists release "Our Town"—all of which proves that the public is still buying star values and that the domestic comedy angle is still popular. The featured cast is headed by Burgess Meredith, Alan Mowbray, Harry Davenport and Eve Arden. Ernest Lubitsch acted as producer-director on this Sol Lessor-United Artist release.

Incidentally, Mr. Lubitsch, upon completion of "THAT UNCERTAIN FEELING," resigned from the Lessor organization and is now associated with Mr. Zanuck at Twentieth Century-Fox.

Don't book this one too close to Warner's "Affectionately Yours" which was released the following week as both pictures star Merle Oberon and it will probably be better to keep them a few weeks apart.

UNIVERSAL—4 Releases

Universal Pictures have four new releases this week two of which are holding fairly well, considering present conditions, while the second two are just fair programmers.

Universal's top release is the new Joe Pasternak production, "THE FLAME OF NEW ORLEANS," which at 87% is doing practically the same business as Marlene Dietrich's last starring vehicle "Seven Sinners."

"THE FLAME OF NEW ORLEANS" may not do Miss Dietrich much good but

it was certainly a help to Bruce Cabot who gets the best break of his career in this picture. Immediately following the preview he received several offers from major studios and he has just recently signed up with Walter Wanger for two United Artists productions.

The featured cast is headed by Roland Young, Mischa Auer, Andy Devine, Frank Jenks and Laura Hope Crews. Rene Clair, who directed several pictures abroad, didn't do so well on this, his first American made picture.

"THE FLAME OF NEW ORLEANS" will probably get by in the more sophisticated houses but will not do so well on its general runs, particularly in the "sticks" where it will be better to double this one with a much stronger box office picture.

Universal's second release, "MODEL WIFE," co-starring Joan Blondell and Dick Powell, is doing fair on its first runs at an 80% average but will probably do much better in the nabes as this one is aimed at family audiences.

Supporting Mr. and Mrs. Powell are Charles Ruggles, Lee Bowman and Billy Gilbert. Leigh Jason produced and directed from his own original story.

Universal's third release, "THE BLACK CAT," 72%, is a little better than the average programmer from this studio. This murder-mystery-melodrama stars Basil Rathbone with Hugh Herbert, Broderick Crawford, and Gale Sondergaard in supporting roles.

With Universal releasing "Man Made Monster" and "Horror Island" in the last two weeks and "THE BLACK CAT" this week, it rather looks as if they were trying to give exhibitors plenty of horror thrillers. But judging from general exhibitor reports it also looks as if the public is getting fed up on so much of this type of entertainment along with many similar releases of the same calibre from Paramount, Columbia and Monogram.

Universal's fourth and last release this week, "MUTINY IN THE ARCTIC," 70%, is another of the Richard Arlen-Andy Devine series. These pictures apparently have little first run value but make excellent

*Continued on Page 15

1 FEATURE "GOING UP"

	Was	Now
Lady From Cheyenne	UNIV	90 92

9 FEATURES "GOING DOWN"

		Was	Now
Meet John Doe	WAR	162	155
Men of Boys Town	MGM	136	131
That Night in Rio	FOX	135	131
The Great Lie	WAR	122	118
Sea Wolf	WAR	115	112
Pot O' Gold	UA	106	102
Blondie Goes Latin	COL	78	76
You're the One	PAR	75	73
Horror Island	UNIV	72	70

Powell-Loy Go Slapstick in MGM's 'Love Crazy'

MGM
The Digest's Box Office Estimate
130%

Producer Pandro S. Berman
Director Jack Conway
Screenplay William Ludwig,
Charles Lederer, David Hertz
Original David Hertz, William Ludwig
Stars William Powell, Myrna Loy

Featured: Gail Patrick, Jack Carson, Florence Bates, Sidney Blackmer, Sig Rumann, Vladimir Sokoloff, Donald MacBride, Sara Haden, Kathleen Lockhart, Fern Emmett, Joseph Crehan, George Meeker, Clarence Muse, Elisha Cook Jr.

Photographer Ray June
Time 100 minutes

"Love Crazy" is whacky, to the extent of being whacky-whacky. If any two players other than William Powell and Myrna Loy had been in it the picture would have fallen into the intermediate ranks as "just another married life farce."

But as it is, Jack Conway's fast-paced direction combines with the stars to make an evening of entertainment that may not be the tops, but will at least send them out happy. That's plenty these days. And the box office draw is in very safe hands with the magic of those two top names for your marquee.

Most fortunate item concerned with the story is that it has two riotous comedy scenes spaced just where they do the most good—at the start and nearing the finish wire. The opening one finds Powell, already in a jam because a former flame, Gail Patrick, is in the same elevator with him, caught with his head between the sections of the elevator door while the "lift" bounces up and down erratically. It is played all-out for Sennett slapstick, and it is great. Second situation follows the Sennett trail for a hilarious chase, Powell reappearing in his wife's apartment in female guise, etc.

Current Reviews

	We Est.
Love Crazy MGM	130
One Night In Lisbon PAR	115
Sunny RKO	100
She Knew All the Answers COL	85
Too Many Blondes UNIV	75
Lady From Louisiana REP	75
Scattergood Baines Pulls the Strings RKO	65
Redhead MONO	65

All this happens because Powell and Loy bicker to the point of thinking they want a divorce and lawyer-friend Sidney Blackmer advises Powell that he can avoid a lot of complications by feigning insanity. Unfortunately Powell does such a good job that the authorities take him seriously and he lands in the place behind the high walls.

Incidentally, the picture is on thin ice when touching on this insanity theme. On several occasion is just skirts the edge of being unpleasant. Bulk of the picture's meaty opportunities go to Powell, and he uses them to the fullest. From straight Powell, to crazy Powell, and on to a "Charlie's Aunt" female impersonator Powell, he is the spark-plug. Myrna Loy is her own assured self at this sort of thing. In support, Gail Patrick turns in an effective performance, while Jack Carson—being seen more and more frequently these days—makes a role as a "likeable rat" stand out.

Jack Conway's direction milks the comedy scenes with every resource of a veteran, and

no need to apologize to the ancestors of many of the gags. When you consider what he has accomplished with the material given, it must be recorded that the scripters let him down.

Producer Pandro Berman evidently mixed his entertainment elements with an eye on the war-weary audience, and the results will be on the right side of the ledger.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: Not really Powell-Loy top standard, but so screwballly that it should hit the present taste of the customers. Previewed May 12th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "Nothing has been missed that will draw a roar of honest mirth even to a lot of physical slapstick and several gags so surefire that they will never age."

VARIETY: "Those disciples of sophisticated comedy William Powell and Myrna Loy, here turn to broadest farce, the screwiest assignment they ever have had, and romp on it for heavy laugh payoff. It's a coin picture because of the names and the content, which is antidotal for the encircling gloom."

'Scattergood Pulls Strings' Pleasing Family Fare

BRANDT-RKO
The Digest's Box Office Estimate
65%

Producer Jerrold T. Brandt
Director Christy Cabanne
Screenplay Christy Cabane, Bernard Schubert
Based on stories by Clarence Budington Kelland
Stars Guy Kibbee

Featured: Bob Watson, Susan Peters, James Corner, Emma Dunn, Dink Trout, Monte Blue, Carl Stockdale, Paul White, Fern Emmett, Lee "Lasses" White, Ann Shoemaker, Gordon Hart, Howard Hickman, Earl Hodgins.
Photographer Jack Mackenzie
Time 69 minutes

A fine family picture, even better than the excellent predecessor which started off this modest budget RKO series. It will find many a welcome spot.

Producer Jerrold Brandt has adhered to his initial policy of keying his series to the same home-spun, homefolk, Vermont spirit

that Clarence Buddington Kelland has been selling with Scattergood all these years from the pages of American Magazine. In Director Christy Cabanne he has a cooperator who knows how to milk these "milk of human kindness" things to the utmost, and in star, Guy Kibbee he has a real Scattergood.

This story again finds the Kelland character a local Mr. Fix-It who takes on all the world's troubles in his own mild way, but always leaves everybody happy no matter how knotty the original problem. He is concerned this time with the problem of a run-away boy, a role handled with great natural skill by young Bobs Watson. As a sort of side-issue he fixes up the romance of the juveniles, Susan Peters and James Connors.

It seems that Bobs has run away from a state institution for waifs, but also has the shadow of a father who is under a framed-

up charge of murder. Scattergood takes the boy in, then unravels the father's case.

Best values in the picture came through Cabanne's ability to wring the tops of emotion from his tear jerker scenes without going overboard to the bathos point. Support is excellent, with Monte Blue and Emma Dunn seen to especial advantage.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: They will go for it strong in the nabes. Previewed May 8th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "The first of this series produced by Jerry Brandt, was an excellent show. The second is a better one. It will steal the bill from many a more pretentious offering."

VARIETY: "This is a simple, folksy, country-philosophy type of drama which has been geared for the dual bill audience, and, as such, will fill the bill nicely as a programmer in the secondary runs."

THE *Greatest* SHOW OF TALENT
EVER PACKED INTO ONE FEATURE PICTURE!

Alice **FAYE**
Jack **OAKIE**
John **PAYNE**
Cesar **ROMERO**

**THE GREAT
AMERICAN
BROADCAST**

MARY BETH HUGHES *with* JAMES NEWILL
THE FOUR INK SPOTS • NICHOLAS
BROTHERS • WIERE BROTHERS

Directed by
Archie Mayo

Associate Producer
Kenneth Macgowan

Original Screen Play by
Don Ettlinger and Edwin
Blum, Robert Ellis and
Helen Logan • Dances
staged by Hermes Pan

Lyrics and music of
the smash hit songs
by Mack Gordon
and Harry Warren

20th
CENTURY
FOX

NOW
GRAUMAN'S CHINESE
and LOEW'S STATE

"THE GREAT AMERICAN BROADCAST"

"I'VE GOT A BONE TO PICK WITH YOU"

"RUN LITTLE RAINDROP"

"WHERE YOU ARE"

"LONG AGO LAST NIGHT"

"I TAKE TO YOU"

ARCHIE MAYO

Directed



In Production
"CHARLEY'S AUNT"
Starring
Jack Benny

"The Great Ame



ALICE FAYE



rican Broadcast"

'One Night in Lisbon' Better Than The Title

PARAMOUNT

The Digest Box Office Estimates

115%

Producer-Director Edward H. Griffith
 Screenplay Virginia Van Upp
 Original Play John Van Druten
 Stars Fred MacMurray, Madeleine Carroll

Featured: Patricia Morison, Billie Burke, John Loder, Dame May Whitty, Edmund Gwenn, Reginald Denny, Billy Gilbert, Marcel Dalio, Bruce Wyndham, Jerry Mandy.

Photographer Bert Glennon
 Time 97 Minutes

"One Night in Lisbon" tries to skirt a difficult problem. The records have shown, probably since this picture was started, that pictures concerning war and refugee problems are not selling. Still, the picture cannot dodge its title while it tries valiantly to be entertainment that could stand on its own feet, war or no war.

It succeeds as entertainment, thanks largely to a corking performance by Fred MacMurray. How it will succeed as box office lure depends on selling it so that the might-be customers don't think they are being lured to another one of those war worries. They might figure that they can stay home with the radio and the columnists and know authentically what "happens in Lisbon."

In recording the fact that the picture goes over as entertainment a minus mark must also be chalked up for the fact that quite a bit of this entertainment is on that slightly dusty line where the Hays office tries to keep watch. Since the paying public is not up on release dates and the day and date of picture executive shifts, there may be many who will say: "See, that's what happened when Joe Breen quit his job."

Fred MacMurray is an American aviator, one of that band who fly the lone nights delivering bombers to England; Madeleine Carroll is doing her share for the Isle as a volunteer chauffeur in the diplomatic service.

Boy meets girl first under the thrilling intimacy of an air raid shelter during an alarm. Boy decides that he wants girl. There is an ex-wife, Patricia Morison, in the proceedings to complicate matters. And for some reason or other there is a hint of spies towards the end that is never entirely justified in its relationship to the entertainment that preceded.

The cast is a hand-picked group. In addition to the fine work by the stars, you do not need our word to assure the performances of the supporting cast listed in the credits above. Though we should stop for a word

or more about Edmund Gwenn, whose characterization of an English diplomat does a great deal to give the picture its back-bone of sincerity while the rest are the ribs of risibility.

Director Edward Griffith shows his top skill throughout, particularly in handling of the chuckling intimate scenes.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: On its own, as entertainment, a good bet. Problems are the semi-war title in some spots; in others the ultra-spices of so many of the lines. Previewed May 7th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "World War II is too close to America's daily consciousness to be acceptable motion picture entertainment. Hollywood's several blasts at foreign dictators, and the horror of their persecutions have not done well at the box office. Now comes producer-director Edward H. Griffith, armed with a clever script by the brilliant Virginia Van Upp, to show how the current conflict can be treated as a background to entertainment that the public will accept. Griffith's solution is amazingly simple. He never allows the war to become other than a background for a light comedy-romance."

VARIETY: "This is as slick and engaging a love tale as has come out of Hollywood romance hoppers in a long time. A romantic comedy, it is both comic and romantic in a peculiarly charming way and will find welcome amongst all kinds and shades of audiences from the big towns to the cross-roads." Vt

'She Knew All The Answers' Packed With Laughs

COLUMBIA

The Digest's Box Office Estimate

85%

Producer Charles R. Rogers
 Assistant producer William A. Pierce
 Director Richard Wallace
 Screenplay Harry Segall, Kenneth Earl, Curtis Kenyon
 Original Jane Allen
 Stars Joan Bennett, Franchot Tone

Featured: John Hubbard, Eve Arden, William Tracy, Pierre Watkin, Almira Sessions, Thurston Hall, Grady Sutton.

Photographer Henry Freulich
 Time 85 minutes

Charles Rogers has given Columbia a picture that is definitely an audience natural. Its box office temperature will depend on two factors, first, the possible value in the Franchot Tone-Joan Bennett combination as ticket sellers; second, the amount of heat you can generate out of the enthusiastic word-of-mouth build-up that the picture deserves, and will undoubtedly get. And that is a selling title.

"She Knew All the Answers" is unique in one respect—it is the first light comedy in many months that actually has a story basis. Most of our recent previews have given the impression that all that is needed for a producer to start a light comedy or screwball farce is a fragment of an idea, a director and players who can get by with anything.

But here, there is a story and a fine scripting job, delightful playing in the comedy vein by the cast, and all topped by sure-fire direction from Richard Wallace.

If the slightest of faults can be found with the picture as entertainment, it is that old debbil "overlength." It could have been trimmed to accentuate its real values.

Franchot Tone's performance makes one feel that he has never played anything but light comedy in his life, and that he knows all the tricks of that trade. It is one of the best jobs that Tone has contributed to the screen, both because it is so unexpected, and because of skill in handling it.

The real surprise of the picture, however, is Joan Bennett. Miss Bennett has not had the advantage of a really good role in a long, long time. But here, going back to the first principles of her early comedy personality days she really sparks the picture right along in high gear.

John Hubbard continues to improve in acting assurance and in evidences of versatility. There were many who were saying some months back that John Hubbard was just a flash in the pan—we say it will be a flash that will be around for a long time. Dependable Eve Arden is on hand, with her knack of handling straight lines "over the shoulder" that adds something to them every time. William Tracy should not be forgotten for creditable mention.

But the nub of the subject is in the direction. Richard Wallace went to town on this one. He gets believable characterizations out of a comedy, he keeps it moving smoothly, and he remembers the Number One rule of a laugh picture—he tops every scene with a gag, or a line, or a bit of suspense as to what will happen in the next scene.

And when he has something broad to work with, he milks it. The two highlights are Joan Bennett's amateurish efforts to struggle with telephone switchboard and its multiplicity of cords; and a later sequence when Joan is trying to teach Franchot how to get along without eye-glasses.

Yes, Rogers and his long-time aide, Assistant Producer Bill Peirce, can take a deserved bow for meeting current desires.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: You can safely go out on the limb about it as entertainment, but put advance pressure on to get your money's worth. Previewed May 21st.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "Charles R. Rogers' first production for Columbia is a neat business comedy. Previewed before an appreciative audience, the show chalked up enough laughs to assure profitable business in its play dates."

VARIETY: "A comedy of extraordinary brightness and high entertainment value, this tale of a girl and a boss and a playboy, once titled "A Girl's Best Friend Is Wall Street," should find wide welcome where sheer amusement is wanted."

Herbert Wilcox Clicks With Musical 'Sunny'

RKO-RADIO

The Box Office Digest's Estimate
100%

Producer-director Herbert Wilcox
Associate producer Merrill G. White
Screenplay Sig Herzig
From musical comedy by Otto Harbach,
Oscar Hammerstein, Jerome Kern
Star Anna Neagle

Featured: Ray Bolger, John Carroll, Edward Everett Horton, Grace Hartman, Paul Hartman, Frieda Inescort, Helen Westley, Benny Rubin, Muggins Davies, Richard Lane, Martha Tilton.

Photographer Russell Metty
Time 97 minutes

"Sunny" is easily the best of the trio of pictures Herbert Wilcox has made since transferring his British production activities to Hollywood. It is all-around audience entertainment for the bulk of the cash customers.

There is more of reality in "Sunny" than in the previous Wilcox musicals, which had story outlines too much on the unreal stage

formula. In addition it has a completely rounded out cast that is delightful, and that is topped off by some of the best musical numbers that can be heard today, even though their birthdays were many years ago.

Anna Neagle is seen to excellent advantage in the title role. The surprise standout of the show is John Carroll, who takes a straight musical comedy lead role and makes it stand out with his combination of personality and his singing. This reviewer remembers Carroll's singing from his Monogram days in E. B. Derr productions, but at that time the trade critics used to dismiss it with suspicions of "dubbing."

When you get to the character and comedy roles you reach for pleasant adjectives again. Helen Westley, as the crabby old rich Aunt Barbar, is grand. Every line she delivers rolls them in their seats. Of course, that is no new trick for Helen Westley. Ray Bolger and his dancing are the mainstay of the musical numbers. No need to talk about reliable Edward Everett Horton. The Hartman's, top-flight comedy dancing team in the metropolitan centers, register with a sock

that should erase memories of a couple of Wurtzel B's inflected on them some years ago.

Not until we check the program did we realize that a "Major Montgomery Stone" seal trainer, was none other than that remarkable fellow, Benny Rubin. There is something wrong with an industry whose production guiders don't realize the amazing untapped possibilities in the Benny Rubin talents.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: Sure-fire audience bet for these days. Previewed May 16th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "By far the best of the Anna Neagle filmicals that Herbert Wilcox has brought us, 'Sunny' is headed for a bright box office future."

VARIETY: "Musical-minded ticket buyers will find this version of 'Sunny' to their liking. Tunes fully strung together with the melodies of the old stage piece, picture is showmanly handled in all departments to give full value to the Jerome Kern music and the particular talents of its cast headliners."

'Too Many Blondes' Fails to Make 'B' Grade

UNIVERSAL

The Digest's Box Office Estimate
75%

Associated producer Joseph G. Sanford
Director Thornton Freeland
Screenplay Maxwell Shane, Louis S. Kaye
Original Maxwell Shane
Stars Rudy Vallee, Helen Parrish

Featured: Lon Chaney Jr., Jerome Cowan, Shemp Howard, Iris Adrian, Eddie Quillan, Irving Bacon, Jeanne Kelly, Pavo Moreno, Gus Schilling, Dorothy Lee, Carmela and Jose Cansino, Dinorah Rego, Humberto Herpera and Orchestra.

Photographer Milton Krasner
Art Director Jack Otterson
Time 60 minutes

Even as a B offering, "Too Many Blondes" does not come off with anything to boast about. Principal reason for this is an anaemic story and script which leaves it to a hard-working, personable cast to carry the burden. And if it had not been for the valiant work of that cast—it would have been just too bad.

Technically speaking, the picture was probably planned as a musical, but the result on the screen is a gagged-up hash of comedy with some music that never seems to know where it is heading, and does not care much whether it gets there.

The condolences must go to the cast, and particularly to Rudy Vallee. The latter is a showman to his finger tips, you can feel it

THE BATTING AVERAGES

Weekly changes in the standings shown in Digest's feature "THE BATTING AVERAGES" have been so few recently that the feature will hereafter appear only when important changes, or a sufficient number of changes make it of interest.

This will probably be every other week or so for a while, but of course when the new season's product begins to hit the market it will undoubtedly be resumed as a weekly feature.

on the screen as well as on the air. And that applies to whether he is singing or acting. Vallee has that Crosbyish manner that bespeaks a showman who knows how to sell his stuff.

Some day some wary producer will find the spot and the method of handling for Vallee.

Balance of the cast also works hard. Helen Parrish, in a rather negative role, is more than adequate. Lon Chaney, Jr., Eddie Quillan, and Shemp Howard spark the comedy scenes so that you do find yourself getting many enjoyable laugh moments out of the picture. But they do not get

enough opportunity. Shemp Howard, in particular, makes his brief moments a stand-out.

Iris Adrian, formerly just seen in minor roles, shows definite appeal, and an extremely unique appearance. She is a Mae West type, yet more human.

The story concern the married life of Rudy and Helen, which is about to be busted up by a divorce because she resents the attentions of blonde friends of his premarital days. Action revolves around the fact that they continue to live together while they save up enough money for the divorce. You do not need our information that they end the sixty minutes all hunky-dory again.

Thornton Freeland does his best as director, and manages to spark whatever live material he has. But they didn't give him much of a frame-work.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: Except for the Vallee name possibilities, just another filler. Vallee has some good songs, and repeats "Man on the Flying Trapeze" for a hit scene. Previewed May 13th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "In the modest-budget musical field, 'Too Many Blondes', starring Rudy Vallee, will prove a winner."

VARIETY: "'Too Many Blondes' is a mild little comedy with music that is slated for spotty reception in its supporting bill play dates, but because of its short running time and a number of good laughs, will manage to please sufficiently."

HIS GREATEST ROLE!

Jack Benny



as Charley's Aunt

From 20th CENTURY-FOX...

FOR NEXT SEASON!



What Happened

THIS WEEK ?

The Week's Good Thought:

The good thought is for the cockles of your Editor's heart, because the week can prompt a few words of deserved recognition for a grand lady of the screen—Helen Westley. . . To be more prosaic, for a consistent scene-saver. . . In Herbert Wilcox's "Sunny" Miss Westley does a job that really can't fit anything but the word: "Terrific!" . . . With less opportunity, in another preview of the week, Republic's "Lady From Louisiana," Miss Westley turned in the same audience capturing work. . . Of course, there is no news in proclaiming Helen Westley's ability, but we just thought you'd like a tip-off on some characterizations worth seeing.

The Week's Disappointment:

When a natural born showman like Rudy Vallee can suffer visually before audiences that have known him principally over the air in such an anemic piece as "Too Many Blondes" . . . Seems as though, somehow, there should be the formula or set-up to take advantage of one of the show-world's top sellers in the past decade. . . . Vallee should play himself, the Vallee that made his following. . . In "Too Many Blondes" he plays a straight role that a half a dozen neophytes in Hollywood could have handled. . . Except for a couple of song spots. . . . That's just buying a personality and throwing it away.

The Week's Vital Statistics:

Something should be placed in the archives this week to record the fact that Harry Sherman previewed his THIRTY-FIFTH Hopalong Cassidy, for delivery to Paramount. . . That must be some sort of record. . . The interesting part to your Editor, though, is not the cold figures, but his memory of the number of years that Harry Sherman tried to peddle Clarence Mulford's "Hopalong" character around Hollywood and with just a brush-off. . . Any success Harry has earned in recent years was earned the hard way—and by FAITH in his merchandise.

The Week's Cheerful Thought:

Joan Bennett . . . Digest reviewers have so often found fault with Joan Bennett's cold-as-ice characterizations that it had probably almost become a habit. . . . But any probabilities were jarred this week by the finesse and bubble with which she handles a light comedy role in Charles Rogers' picture, "She Knew All the Answers" . . . It is an ebullient, delightful performance. . . . Keep it up, Joan. . . Incidentally, Franchot Tone will help audience liking with his characterization. . . So perhaps it is about time to say a word for Director Richard Wallace, who hasn't always received the best of assignments in recent years, but who goes to town with this one.

All Major Features Released in 1941

A

OVER \$500,000

Philadelphia Story	MGM	181
Road to Zanzibar	PAR	157
Meet John Doe	WAR	155
Ziegfeld Girl	MGM	148
Kitty Foyle	RKO	145
Tobacco Road	FOX	138
That Hamilton Woman	UA	135
Western Union	FOX	132
Men of Boys Town	MGM	131
That Night in Rio	FOX	131
Back Street	UNIV	129
Strawberry Blonde	WAR	124
Lady Eve	PAR	120
Nice Girl?	UNIV	120
Virginia	PAR	120
The Great Lie	WAR	118
Mr. and Mrs. Smith	RKO	118
Flight Command	MGM	115
The Devil and Miss Jones	RKO	115
The Sea Wolf	WAR	112
Come Live With Me	MGM	107
Hudson's Bay	FOX	103
P.O. Gold	UA	102
That Uncertain Feeling	UA	97
Lady From Cheyenne	UNIV	92
Flame of New Orleans	UNIV	87
Son of Monte Cristo	UA	87
No Ends Our Night	UA	85
Victory	PAR	82

B

FROM \$200,000 TO \$500,000

Andy Hardy's Private Secretary	MGM	133
This Thing Called Love	COL	125
High Sierra	WAR	110
Cheers for Miss Bishop	UA	90
Footsteps In The Dark	WAR	86
Tall Dark and Handsome	FOX	86
Adam Had Four Sons	COL	86
A Girl, A Guy and A Gob	RKO	85
Topper Returns	UA	84
Bad Man	MGM	84
Maisie Was a Lady	MGM	83
Wagon's Roll at Night	WAR	83
Mad Doctor	PAR	81
People vs. Dr. Kildare	MGM	80
Model Wife	UNIV	80
Sis Hopkins	REP	81
Texas Rangers Ride Again	PAR	78
Invisible Woman	UNIV	78
Three on a Honeymoon	WAR	77
Round Up	PAR	77
The Penalty	MGM	76
Las Vegas Nights	PAR	75
Flight from Destiny	WAR	76
Man Who Lost Himself	UNIV	74
You're the One	PAR	73
They Met In Argentina	RKO	73
Romance of the Rio Grande	FOX	73
Blonde Inspiration	MGM	73
Pack Cat	UNIV	72
Wild Man of Borneo	MGM	72
Rage in Heaven	MGM	72
Life with Henry	PAR	72
Golden Hoofs	FOX	72
Road Show	UA	71
Keeping Company	MGM	71
Murder Among Friends	FOX	70

Hard Boiled Canary	PAR	63
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C

FROM \$100,000 TO \$200,000

Ruck Privates	UNIV	108
Six Lessons from Madame LaZonga	UNIV	80
Elery Queen, Master Detective	COL	80
Elery Queen Penthouse Mystery	COL	78
Blondie Goes Latin	COL	76
Scotland Yard	FOX	72
Phantom Submarine	COL	72
Play Girl	RKO	72
Trial of Mary Dugan	MGM	72
A Dangerous Game	UNIV	72
Man Made Monster	UNIV	72
Face Behind the Mask	COL	71
Ride, Kelly, Ride	FOX	71
Boston Blackie	COL	71
Horror Island	UNIV	70
Mutiny in the Arctic	UNIV	70
Dead Men Tell	FOX	70
Free and Easy	COL	70
Devil Commands	MGM	70
Sleepers West	FOX	70
Great Mr. Nobody and the Girl	WAR	70
The Monster and the Girl	PAR	70
Lucky Devils	UNIV	70
Where Did You Get That Girl	UNIV	70
Convoy	RKO	70
She Couldn't Say No	WAR	70
Michael Shayne, Private Detective	FOX	70
The Case of the Black Parrot	WAR	70
Mr. Dynamite	UNIV	70
A Man Betrayed	REP	70
Lone Wolf Takes A Chance	COL	70
Melody For Three	RKO	70
Let's Make Music	RKO	68
Meet the Chump	UNIV	68
Knockout	WAR	68
Saint in Palm Springs	RKO	67
Father's Son	WAR	67
Strange Alibi	WAR	66
Repent at Leisure	RKO	66
Shadow on the Stairs	WAR	64
Satteringod Rains	RKO	64
Girl in The News	FOX	62

Power Dive	PAR	78
Under Age	COL	71
Roar of the Press	MONO	70
Barnyard Follies	REP	69
Bowery Boy	REP	68
Petticoat Politics	REP	68
Phantom of Chinatown	MONO	67
Arkansas Judge	REP	67
Sign of The Wolf	MONO	66
Mr. District Attorney	REP	66
Land of Liberty	MGM	65
Chamber of Horrors	MONO	65
Footlight Fever	RKO	64
Missing Ten Days	COL	63
Pride of the Bowery	MONO	63
Flying Wild	MONO	62
Her First Romance	MONO	62
You're Out of Luck	MONO	62
The Old Swimming Hole	MONO	60

D

BELOW \$100,000

'Lady From Louisiana' Colorful Action Picture

REPUBLIC

The Box Office Digest's Estimate
75%Associate producer-director Bernard Vorhaus
Screenplay Vera Caspary, Michael Hogan,
Guy Endore
Original Edward James, Francis Faragoh
Stars John Wayne, Ona MunsonFeatured: Ray Middleton, Henry Stephenson,
Helen Westley, Jack Pennick, Dorothy Dand-
ridge, Shimen Ruskin, Jacqueline Dalya, Paul
Scardon, James H. MacNamara, James C.
Morton, Maurice Costello.Photographer Jack Marta
Time 83 minutes

There is colorful atmosphere and action aplenty in Republic's "Lady From Louisiana," and with John Wayne's name value topped by excellent production values, it should prove one of the company's hits for the year.

Bernhard Vorhaus acted as both producer

and director on this one, and again shows that he has skill not yet fully recognized in Hollywood.

Essentially the story is just the old Western formula of the bad-baddy town which needs cleaning up. Helen Westley is the reform minded character and John Wayne the boy who comes to town to do the mop up job.

But—and a very big but—this is not a one-street cow-town, it is New Orleans of a fabulous era, with its French quarter, its Mardi Gras, and even with an overflowing of that ol' debbil Mississippi for an extremely effective melodramatic climax.

John Wayne is right at home in the part. He has played it many times and just transferring it to New Orleans doesn't bother Wayne any. Ona Munson does a good job opposite him, though not entirely in character as picture audiences remember her "Gone With the Wind" role. Support is

very good, with Ray Middleton doing the heavy, and Helen Westley a sort of Carrie Nation who gives you laughs aplenty, standing out. Henry Stephenson is present to advantage.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: Will be a money-making action bet, meller dressed up with skillful direction and colorful production values. Previewed May 16th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "When Republic sets out to make a big-scale production, the scale is really big. 'Lady From Louisiana' purports to tell a true story of the rise and fall of the Louisiana lottery in the plush days of New Orleans in the early '90's. It is a finale that will send them out talking about 'Lady From Louisiana,' and its sales values will undoubtedly double the film's grosses."

VARIETY: "Romantic, exciting and fast-moving in its melodramatic unfoldment under Bernard Vorhaus' skillful pilotage, 'Lady From Louisiana' stands among the best and most entertaining offerings turned out by Republic."

'Ziegfeld Girl' Tops

*Continued from Page 5

fillers for the nabes and grinds where action pictures are popular.

Anne Nagel and Don Terry are featured. Ben Pivar produced and John Rawlins directed.

WARNER—2 Releases

Warners-First National have two releases this week. The first of which is rolling along fairly well while the second is fairly weak programmer.

"THE WAGONS ROLL AT NIGHT," 83%, is Humphrey Bogart's first picture since "High Sierra" but is not nearly as strong at the box office, probably due to the weakness of story which deals with a circus—carnival background, and then again Warners gave "High Sierra" a terrific exploitation campaign and didn't push "THE WAGONS ROLL AT NIGHT" any too strongly.

Sylvia Sidney, after her long absence from the screen, returns as Mr. Bogart's leading lady with the romantic leads portrayed by Eddie Albert and Joan Leslie. Ray Enright directed for Producer Harlan Thompson.

Warner's second release, "STRANGE ALIBI," 66%, is a rather weak programmer from the Brynie Foy unit. It is entirely lacking in marquee names. Arthur Kennedy and Joan Perry head the featured cast. Better spot this one in on a bank night.

RKO—1 Release

RKO-Radio's only new release this week is their new South American musical, "THEY MET IN ARGENTINE," which was supposed to be a special, but turned out so poorly that it wasn't even previewed for the local Hollywood press.

Considering the time and money spent on this picture it should have gone over much better, but outside of the musical numbers there is little entertainment value in the picture. James Ellison and Maureen O'Hara are co-starred and the supporting cast includes Robert Barrat and Albert Viela, a newcomer from the South American screens.

Lou Brock produced and Leslie Goodwins and Jack Hively co-directed.

FOX—1 Release

Twentieth Century-Fox's only new release is another in the Charlie Chan series, "DEAD MEN TELL," which is just doing so-so at a 70% average.

Harry Lachman directed for associate producers Walter Morosco and Ralph Dietrich.

MONOGRAM—1 Release

Monogram's new release this week, "THE ROAR OF THE PRESS," 70%, is much better than the recent releases from that studio, both in production value and marquee names. As the title implies, it is another newspaper yarn and co-stars Jean Parker and Wallace Ford.

The supporting cast includes Jed Prouty, Susan Kaaren and Harlan Tucker. Phil Rosen directed for Producer Scott Dunlap.

BRIEF REVIEW

'Redhead'

MONOGRAM
The Digest's Box Office Estimate
65%

Producer I. E. Chadwick
Associate producer Herman Wohl
Director Edward Cahn
Screenplay Conrad Seiler, Dorothy Reid
Based on novel by Beth Brown
Stars June Lang, Johnny Downs
Featured: Eric Blore, Weldon Heyburn, Anna
Chandler, Frank Jaquet, Zarova, Baron
Emerson, Harry Burns, Donald Thompson.
Photographer Andre Barlatier and
Benjamin Kline
Time 64 minutes

This new version of Monogram's "Redhead" comes off as fair program fodder, with little incitement to grow any more enthusiastic . . . Producer Chadwick apparently took what should be a lightly sexy, and therefore appealing, theme and handled it with the rivets of formula. . . Johnny Downs is a bright light, Eric Blore uses his moments to fine advantage. . . June Lang is okay to look at . . . Tells the story of the playboy who cooks up a deal with a gal in trouble to nick his father for dough by making one of those "marriage in name only" bargains. . . There comes the time when they really begin to love each other, and when she has seemed to make him a reasonable facsimile of a man.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "'Redhead' is so hopelessly amateurish in every department that a reviewer is left with nothing to say about the acting, direction, writing or production. Even in the independent market, this picture has precious little to offer as an entertainment item."

VARIETY: "This is a mild programmer which will have to rely chiefly on the performances and relative name values of June Lang and Johnny Downs to pull through in the lesser situations for which it is geared. Production is hampered by uninspired yarn which Edward Cahn's direction fails to hurdle."

⊙ THE HONOR BOX WINNER ⊙

Robert Z. Leonard

DIRECTED

"ZIEGFELD GIRL"

A M E T R O - G O L D W Y N - M A Y E R P I C T U R E

Box Office

DIGEST

VOLUME 12, NO. 24



54

HOLLYWOOD, CALIF., MAY 26, 1941

★
*The
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ARTS AND SCIENCES

BO Honors To 'Penny Serenade'

See Page 5

The Box Office

DIGEST "HONOR BOX"

The Biggest Grossing Release Of The Past Week

This Week COLUMBIA wins with

"PENNY SERENADE" 131%



Vice-Pres. in Charge of Production
HARRY COHN



Producer-Director
GEORGE STEVENS



Associate Producer
FRED GUIOL



CARY GRANT

From Story by
MARTHA CHEAVENS

Screenplay
MORRIS RYSKIND

Photographer
JOSEPH WALKER

Featured
EDGAR BUCHANAN
ANN DORAN
EVA LEE KUNEY
LEONARD WILLEY



IRENE DUNNE



BEULAH BONDI

The Box Office **DIGEST**

*The Industry's
Distinctive Weekly*

CURE OF THE BLUES

An Editorial by ROBERT E. WELSH

After this present discussion we promise not to worry our readers with any more talk about the current box office slump, and its possible causes. They probably have better ideas about it in Sioux Falls than we have in Hollywood, anyway.

So this is the swan's breath.

A couple of years or so ago our wizards of intellect were telling us that the industry was going to the dogs because the foreign market had disappeared.

Lo, and behold, the financial statements showed everybody making more money than ever before after that supposed foreign market did its Houdini act.

So everybody was happy, except the sucker exhibitor who had paid more than he should because he was sorry for Hollywood's loss of the foreign market.

Now comes something else again.

On top of fine financial statements for the last fiscal periods—those fiscal periods always seem to match whatever the author desires—there comes the present season.

It is bad. And the current entertainment is pretty good.

But it is principally bad because the bosses have discovered that while losing the FOREIGN market only resulted in healthier audits, they have now lost a great big piece of the AMERICAN market. Through draftees, defense workers, all those of the ticket-buying age.

And—omigosh—!!!—suddenly the AMERICAN market becomes important!

It has been quite a shock to a number of our Hollywood masterminds who for five years or more have been listening to the silly intellegensia who had them convinced that the way to success was to gain the approval of New York, Boston, London and Paris critics. Well, that is all water over the dam. What to do about it is the problem.

Our answer is naive, and simple, and fundamental in the show business.

GET BACK TO SHOW-MANSHIP!

And, as the first step, get back to realization of the value of the publicity-exploitation

man who works out of a single exchange.

We used to do it in this business—and we made money—at a time when the top gross in France for a domestic million dollar hit would not total enough francs to pay off the mortgage on a Chic Sale domicile.

We used to do it in this business—and we made money—at a time when all of Latin America put together would not pay off the gaffers handling Mr. Edison's invention on the production. We used to sell to and for AMERICA!

And one of our most valuable weapons was the home town boy, attached to an exchange as an exploitation man and exhibitor contact, who ate up his twenty-four hours trying to figure selling stunts to get another extra dollar for New York, which paid his salary; for Hollywood, which always needed more money; and for the exhibitor, who welcomed his help.

* * *

What did these boys cost?

In a half dozen key centers they were well paid top-line showmen. In most of the country they were ambitious pluggers, ready to utilize every suggestion of the home office; able to adapt the suggestions to peculiar local conditions.

The latter group didn't get so much money.

But every time an "economy" wave hit the industry, they were the first ones to be fired! It was the most simple of executive tasks to sit at a New York desk and say—"We have to cut the budget—here's at least six thousand four hundred dollars that is a cinch. Fire the exploitation men!"

Then the major generals followed through: "We can cut off about ten or twenty percent of those salesmen. Heck, we'll get along without them."

We fired the soldiers in the front line trenches, and we concocted new bonuses for the generals.

Now the generals are trying to fight the war on their own, with inadequate Panzer divisions.

And they aren't doing so well.

Read the figures that the box office tells—and draw your own conclusions!

DISTRIBUTORS' BATTING AVERAGE FOR 1941

		%
1. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer	18 Releases	95
2. United Artists	8 Releases	92
3. Twentieth Century-Fox	16 Releases	88
4. Warners-First National	16 Releases	88
5. Paramount	14 Releases	87
6. RKO-Radio	13 Releases	83
7. Universal	19 Releases	81
8. Columbia	14 Releases	81
9. Republic	8 Releases	69
10. Monogram	9 Releases	63

The Highlighter: **Covers the Picture News Front in a Quick Glance**

To showmen of all sorts—from studios to theaters to what-have-you—the news Highlight of the week is undoubtedly that unheralded decision of the United States Supreme Court in connection with the laws of two States which prohibit ASCAP from setting a price on the value of entertainment created by its members . . . At this great distance from the White City it is difficult to do any analysis from the press association reports, surprisingly skimpy in their coverage of a very important matter . . . All previous court decisions—and there have been many—in connection with ASCAP have been based upon the strength of the copyright laws, the strongest on the legislative books . . . And the knowledge that individual writers could not chase down violations of their copyright in four corners of the nation, so they were entitled to gain this protection by grouping in an organization . . . What does it mean now? . . . If an organization cannot set a standard rate, which gives varying awards anyway as determined by the popularity of the song, will the writers be expected to set their own prices, haphazardly, and ASCAP become merely a collecting agency? . . . And what will be the routine of costs for producers, picture theaters, and places of entertainment of various sorts? . . . Gosh, it's a puzzle . . . Guess we'd better leave it to the lawyers.

JOGGING AROUND FROM HERE TO THERE IN HOLLYTOWN

Any individual's problems with a draft board are his own, and strictly between himself and Uncle Sam, so there is no thought of criticism in recording that we got a chuckle out of an item in the Hollywood Citizen-News that is funny in itself . . . Orson Welles is quoted by that paper as saying: "I am anxious to serve the government in any way if they can find some LIGHT work that I can do." . . . Ye gods! . . . Isn't this the Boy Wonder who sets up his own business deals, who produces his pictures, who directs his pictures, who writes his pictures, who stars in his pictures, and still has spare energy for the radio and the theater? . . . And who does a pretty workmanlike job at all those tasks . . . Ye gods! . . . Wonder what sort of job Orson would consider to be LIGHT work? . . . The writers and the producers are getting nowhere fast in their efforts at an agreement that will have some semblance of permanence . . . With all due respect to a number of close friends, we are not shocked in the slightest over anything that happens as a result of trying to regiment creative brains . . . George Stevens wins two honors this week, both important . . . He did the production-direction chore on our week's Honor Box Winner, and a few days ago was elected

as President of the Screen Director's Guild . . . That's a pretty nice slate the boys lined up, too . . . 1st vice-president, Ernst Lubitsch; 2nd vice-president, Norman Taurog; secretary, William A. Seiter; treasurer, Tay Garnett; assistant treasurer, Phil Rosen . . . The ship of state is in safe hands.

BIG DOINGS AHEAD FOR RAGDAD-BY-THE-PACIFIC

June is practically upon us, and it won't be long now before the exhibitors of the Motion Picture Owners Association will descend on Hollywood for the annual convention . . . Then we will hear things and the exhibitors will see things . . . The exhibitors will not be at all bashful about convention speeches and personal interviews which tell what is wrong with the product Hollywood is delivering; the producers will be anxious to shove forth for screening their prize babies. And both sides will have headaches trying to schedule studio and stage visits without production schedules going whacky . . . And without hurting anybody's feelings . . . Subscribers who have written Box Office Digest within the last month indicate that the attendance will be big . . . but some of the boys put in a proviso and say, "I'll be there if business doesn't go entirely to the bowwows." . . . But even those worriers will be here . . . Who could resist?—and a customer at that—the opportunity to tell Hollywood off in its own domain? . . . Wonder just what the angle is in the announcement that MGM will make a picture called "Young America," after Twentieth-Fox is pretty well along on its "Young Americans?" . . . The latter is a story of the 4-H clubs . . . They say the stories are entirely different—but you would need lots of faith in your eyesight to be certain of detecting the difference on a marquee between "Young America" and "Young Americans."

ADDING UP THE WEEK'S PERSONAL ITEMS

William A. Seiter's future pictures at Universal will be on a producer-director basis, an assignment that is not entirely new to capable Seiter . . . Norman Manning gets a break with the assignment of Joe Valentine to photograph his next picture, soon to start . . . Valentine, one of our best, has been no small contributing factor to the progress of Deanna Durbin from adolescence to young womanhood . . . In fact, putting it that way seems to be an understatement unusual . . . But juggled schedules meant that Valentine couldn't take over the next Durbin, so Manning gets the break . . . And so do Margaret Sullivan and Charles Boyer who will star in the Bruce Manning production for Universal . . . Larry Darmour is going back to pay-dirt with his new Jack Holt

deal . . . This time it is for a serial, "Jack Holt of the Secret Service." . . . The Darmour-Holt team was one of the most consistent money-makers in the medium-budget field that any distributor has known over an unbelievable span of years . . . With serials very hot just now—and particularly good Latin American bets, compared with what they did in England and Continental markets—the team should pick up the chips where they left off a few months ago . . . Bill Koenig gets a contract renewal at Twentieth-Fox—not entirely a surprise—Incidentally, they tell us in whispers that one of the reasons Zanuck is so willing to sock home that Technicolor showmanship in his big ones is the efficiency with which Koenig worked out the handling of the color medium so as to scare away some of the cost bugaboos.

STRIKES AND SUCH LIKE HAPPEN HERE, TOO

With the newspaper headlines, and the editorial pages, devoting plenty of space to strikes in defense industries, you wouldn't expect the picture business to stay outside the limelight would you? . . . So this week we had our Walt Disney strike . . . First result being to postpone the preview of the awaited "Reluctant Dragon." . . . A week ago it was the Schlesinger plant, quickly settled by the producer's capitulation . . . Disney says he is ready to bargain with any recognized majority group in his big plant, but he stands like Stonewall Jackson against the closed shop . . . All this happened on the heels of the blast from a Federal Jury in New York which accuses George Browne, czar of IATSE from studio to projection room, and his Hollywood man, Willie Bioff, of extorting some half million or so from the studios in 1938 with threats of a complete blackout on production—and possibly projectionists allies over the country . . . The rank and file is doing a lot of buzzing . . . Good news to hear that Monty Banks is nearing the starting gate on direction of the first Laurel-Hardy feature for Twentieth, "Forward March." . . . Sounds like money in the star names and title combination, and like laff entertainment with Banks at the helm . . . Even back down the years when Monty was only the star he was giving us some of our choicest belly-laughs—and with Laurel and Hardy in the harness the result should be something to start chuckling about now . . . Everybody has the low-down on that Bette Davis—Sam Goldwyn—Willie Wyler squabble, but everybody's low-down differs from the other fellows . . . So we won't hazard a guess . . . Will probably be settled in a day or so. anyway, and the columnar publicity is not doing the build-up for the picture any harm.

The Box Office: 'Penny Serenade' Sings Happy Tune at the Boxoffices

Of 8 New Releases In The Past Week,
2 Ran Over 100%, 1 Came Through
Okay, And 5 Were Very Weak

COLUMBIA—2 Releases

Columbia has two new releases this week, one the Honor Box Winner, and the second a better than average programmer.

George Stevens' production "PENNY SERENADE" has opened in a large number of important key city runs from coast to coast and is doing exceptionally well—131%—which means hold-over dates in most cases. While 131% is a little below what we had estimated, still box office conditions have been dropping off quite severely in the last two or three weeks.

"PENNY SERENADE" is Producer-Director George Stevens' first vehicle for Columbia, and co-stars that popular team Irene Dunne and Cary Grant with an excellent featured cast headed by Beulah Bondi, Edgar Buchanan and Ann Doran.

Exhibitors can always count on Dunne and Grant bringing in box office results and "PENNY SERENADE" lives up to that role.

Columbia's second release, "HER FIRST BEAU," 75%, is much better than the average programmer coming out of Columbia of recent date. It co-stars Jackie Cooper with Jane Withers (courtesy of Twentieth Century-Fox Pictures) in a juvenile romantic comedy which will undoubtedly do much better when it hits the neighborhood runs.

The supporting cast includes Edith Fellows, Josephine Hutchinson and William Tracy. Ted Reed directed and Ben Kahaner produced.

FOX—Also 2 Releases

Twentieth Century-Fox Studios also have two releases this week, the first a musical special, while the second is a fair programmer.

Fox's best release is Darryl Zanuck's new musical, "THE GREAT AMERICAN

8 New Releases Not In The Last Issue

	%	Est.
Penny Serenade	COL	131...135
Great American Broadcast.....	FOX	111...120
Reaching for the Sun.....	PAR	80...100
Her First Beau.....	COL	75...75
Washington Melodrama	MGM	74...70
Ride on Vaquero	FOX	71...75
Double Date	UNIV	71...75
Great Train Robbery.....	REP	66...70

BROADCAST," 111%, which deals with the history of radio.

Alice Faye, fresh from her triumph in "That Night in Rio" is co-starred with John Payne, who also played opposite Alice in "Tin Pan Alley." Jack Oakie and Cesar Romero head the featured cast which also includes the Four Ink Spots, Mary Hughes, The Nicholas Bros., and many others.

Archie Mayo directed and Kenneth Macgowan was associate producer to Mr. Zanuck.

If Ascap music was not barred from N.B.C. and C.B.S. "THE GREAT AMERICAN BROADCAST" would probably be pulling much better business as national hook-ups with song plugs always boost the box office.

Twentieth Century-Fox's second release this week is another Sol Wurtzel programmer, "RIDE ON VAQUERO," 71%, which is the latest in the Cisco Kid series starring Cesar Romero. Needless to say this western series has little first run value in the key cities but it is well received in the nabes and western territories.

Mr. Romero's supporting cast includes Mary Beth Hughes, Lynne Roberts, Chris-Pin Martin and Robert Lowery. Herbert Leeds directed.

PARAMOUNT—1 Release

Paramount's only release this week is "REACHING FOR THE SUN," 80%, and is a fairly entertaining romance with a big factory background. The picture was originally sold under the title "F.O.B. Detroit." Joel McCrea is starred with Ellen Drew as his new leading lady.

The featured cast is headed by Eddie Bracken, Albert Dekker and Billy Gilbert.

William Wellman produced and directed under William LeBaron's supervision.

MGM—Also 1 Release

MGM's new release is a Frank Morgan program picture, "WASHINGTON MEL-ODRAMA," 74%, and while it is entertaining and well produced it is lacking in mar-que names, thus it will have to be spotted in as a filler.

The featured cast is headed by Ann Rutherford, Kent Taylor, Don Daily Jr. and Lee Bowman. S. Sylvan Simon directed and Edgar Selwyn produced.

UNIVERSAL—1 Release

Universal's new release is "DOUBLE DATE," 71%, a fair programmer co-starring Edmund Lowe and Una Merkel, with Peggy Moran and Rand Brooks featured. This light comedy drama will make a good filler for the nabes and that is about all.

Glenn Tryon directed and Joe Sanford produced.

REPUBLIC—Also 1 Release

Republic's release this week, "THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY," 66% comes under the heading of strictly a western and stars Bob Steele. Real old-timers in the film business will probably remember the sensation that was created by Thomas Edison's original "Great Train Robbery" which was produced as a one reeler.

Joe Kane produced and directed this one.

4 FEATURES "GOING UP"

	Was Now
Ziegfeld Girl	MGM 148...150
Bad Man	MGM 84...86
The Wagons Roll at Night.....	WAR 83...85
They Met in Argentine.....	RKO 73...75

8 FEATURES "GOING DOWN"

	Was Now
Meet John Doe.....	WAR 155...144
Pot O' Gold	UA 102...100
That Uncertain Feeling.....	UA 97...85
Topper Returns	UA 84...80
People vs. Dr. Kildare	MGM 80...78
Sis Hopkins	REP 80...76
The Penalty	MGM 76...74
Wild Men of Borneo.....	MGM 72...70

20th's 'Blood and Sand' Smash Dramatic Hit

TWENTIETH CENTURY-FOX
The Digest's Box Office Estimate
150%

Producer Darryl F. Zanuck
Associate Producer Robert T. Kane
Director Rouben Mamoulian
Based on novel by Vicente Blasco Ibanez
Star Tyrone Power

Featured: Linda Darnell, Rita Hayworth, Nazimova, Anthony Quinn, J. Carroll Naish, John Carradine, Lynn Bari, Laird Cregar, Vicente Gomez, William Montague, George Reeves, Pedro De Cordoba, Fortunia Bonanova, Victor Kilian, Michael Morris, Charles Stevens, Ann Todd, Cora Sue Collins, Russell Hicks.

Photographers Ernest Palmer, Ray Rennahan
Technicolor director Natalie Kalmus
Associate Technicolor director Morgan Radelford
Time 123 minutes

There should be no news in the statement that "Blood and Sand" is a box office picture. The original silent version—way down the years—proved that fact; the first selling of the Ibanez novel when originally issued and its consistent reader popularity since then, has maintained the tradition of associating the word "success" with the title "Blood and Sand."

So, therefore, the news awaited is that which concerns what Darryl Zanuck has given to box offices in 1941. That is pocket-book news. And it is good. Very good.

"Blood and Sand" is a solid hit as drama. a superb job as production, a double-barreled socko as showmanship. It can be sold to the limit without fear of comebacks.

First of all, there is the inherent value in the title and the background of memories it evokes. Second, there is Tyrone Power for the marquee. There is the colorful glitter of a theme unusual; dramatic, it is granted, but far away from the dramas of today's newspaper headlines. There is the sympathetic understanding of Mamoulian's direction, his painstaking skill in creating, holding, and getting the most out of each changing mood of the picture. Then, you can wrap these items all up in a package labelled Technicolor, and a package that benefits by its Latin background to present an unusually effective use of color.

Mamoulian has apparently labored painstakingly on each sequence even before setting foot on a stage to direct the first scene. There is a keying of the mood, even to the use of the predominant color in different sequences, that is especially effective. That keying also applies to the angles chosen for the photography.

We rate Tyrone Power's performance as one of the tops of his career. Particularly because, while not entirely losing the Power personality, and never attempting any falsely artificial Spaniard, he still becomes in heart and character the man whom Ibanez wrote about.

Current Reviews

		We Est.
Blood and Sand	FOX	150
Caught in the Draft	PAR	145
Billy the Kid	MGM	140
Million Dollar Baby	WAR	90
Adventure in Washington	COL	75
Shining Victory	WAR	75
Time Out For Rhythm	COL	75

We always seem to like this Linda Darnell, and she is sweetly real in her performance of Tyrone's faithful spouse here, and more than sweet when sugared with Technicolor. Rita Hayworth has the next toughest role to handle, a siren of the calculating but never-missing type. She turns in a performance that will advance a career already going along pretty smooth paths.

Support is so good that it should not be mentioned with that word, except in the matter of footage opportunities given each player. Nazimova comes into her own, as the grand actress she has always been, in the role of Tyrone's mother—who has seen her husband's dying blood mixed with the sand of the arena, and now must await a similar fate for her son.

Other roles are well spotted with sure-fire troupers. Anthony Quinn makes an impression as a rival matador; J. Carroll Naish gives another evidence of his amazing versatility in characterizing a broken veteran of the bull ring; John Carradine. Lynn Bari, Laird Cregar, Pedro Cordoba make their appearances well worth while.

In sequences showing Tyrone Power and Linda Darnell as youngsters, Rex Dowling and Ann Todd register to audience appreciation.

This is the first production to carry Robert Kane's credit line since his return from England and he can feel will proud of his new bow in his native land. The production values are the highest. So a nod to Ernest Palmer and Ray Rennahan on the cameras, Alfred Newman for a haunting musical score, and Richard Day and Joseph C. Wright for an art direction job that must have been herculean.

J Swerling, on the screenplay, had no easy task. He must maintain the romantic flavor in dialogue of a Latin subject; he must, at the same time, give speeches that American audiences will accept from these players whom they know. And his structure must build towards a story that is more a theme than a plot. He surmounted the obstacles with credit.

In case you have forgotten the story—it is the eternal struggle of women for their men. This time the men have the blood of matadors in their veins, the women have the blood of matadors in their sad memories. Ty's father was the greatest of all matadors, Ty sets out to revenge his death by becoming the greatest in his generation. He succeeds, but success takes him away from his women—mother and wife—to the arms of a grab-all. In the end his blood, too, is splashed fatally in the sand while the crowd cries lustily for the next match to begin.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: Solid show hit; worth selling for all you've got. Spot in between some of the musicals and the screwball farces. Previewed May 19th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

Reporter: Mark this down on your pad. "Blood and Sand" will do about all the business it is currently possible to do on a picture, both here in America and in any foreign country that is still playing Hollywood product."

VARIETY: "This potent drama of love and danger, pride and death, if given its natural line of exploitation, may well be one of the foremost grossers of the year."



FOR REVIEWS
THAT SPEAK
DOLLARS AND "SENSE"

It's Box Office Digest



Hope-Lamour 'Caught in the Draft' B-O Natural

PARAMOUNT

The Digest's Box Office Estimate
145%

Producer B. G. DeSylva
 Director David Butler
 Stars Bob Hope, Dorothy Lamour
 Featured: Lynn Overman, Eddie Bracken, Clarence Kolb, Paul Hurst, Ferike Boros, Phyllis Ruth, Irving Bacon, Arthur Loft, Edgar Dearing.
 Story and screenplay Harry Tugend
 Additional dialogue Wilkie C. Mahoney
 Photography Karl Struss
 Time 82 minutes

The cash customers at the Alexander probably had intimations that they were going to see a preview, but they did not know just what it would be. The spontaneous outbursts that greeted the "Bob Hope and Dorothy Lamour" names on the main title, topped by guffaws at the title, give the best tip-off on what this picture will do for box offices.

It's a natural. The stars are hot anyway, but what could be hotter than a pair of hot stars and a hot title for these days?

And the picture measures up to the most optimistic expectations as all-out laugh entertainment. Director David Butler is right at home with this laugh and be merry type of subject, and he doesn't miss a bet in the timing and milking of a script that is replete with gags. Each situation is played for the most, and then some, and then only dropped to move on to another one at the proper tick of the split-second watch.

The stars apparently had a very good time—at least they give the audience one. Bob Hope takes on a tricky characterization in that of a Hollywood movie star whose last desire is to serve in the army, not entirely because of lack of courage but because of a deathly allergy to loud noises. The part might have gone off on the wrong slant without the Hope personality, because it is not entirely safe these days to suggest that anybody might wish to escape the draft. But Hope's ingenious personality makes you

realize that it is all in the spirit of good fun, that Hope has just been set to the task of clowning around for you for eighty-five minutes or so, and gosh, how you like it.

Miss Lamour hasn't the fullest of opportunities, as might be expected of the female lead in an army camp story. But it was wise casting, for picture and for box office, because her presence gives the picture that unique Lamour touch. The feeling that any guy would be a sap who didn't fall in love with her. Of course, there are no sarongs around any army camp, but there is a Hollywood opening which gives opportunity for the palpitating sophomores to view Dorothy in a cute swim suit.

Support is chiefly in the hands of Lynne Overman and Eddie Bracken—a pair of very safe troupers. Overman, in particular, playing without the necessity of heavy character make-up, makes a good straight for the Hope gags. Bracken clicks again, a habit the boy is getting.

There are other excellent jobs in the support. One scene—milked to the utmost—has Edgar Dearing playing a recruiting sergeant, Bob and Dorothy, the other two in the action, and it got howls. There is a youngster, Phyllis Ruth, in for a bit as a nurse, who will bear watching. She is the cutie-cutie type, without being a dumb Dora—and there are always spots in the comedy script sadly in need of girls who can do that well.

There are no songs in the picture, which is probably just as well. The audience would probably have been ready to greet them, but they would have thrown the laughs off pace.

Since there must always be a story, we'll tell you what there is of this one. Bob Hope is a romantic Hollywood idol, with a complex against noises—particularly gunfire. His pals are Overman and Bracken. Comes news of the possible passage of a draft bill. Bob has to get married. He picks on the

daughter of a regular Army Colonel, Dorothy Lamour. Making good on a big bluff to the girl he finds himself without intention enlisted in the army.

That's all there is, there isn't any more. Just get Hope in the army and you know where the laughs will be. Plot purposes make it necessary to round up the picture with a semi-serious danger sequence that can be forgiven, since pictures must end somewhere, mustn't they?

This is the first Paramount picture your present previewer has caught with the credit title: "Produced by B. G. De Sylva." There are no words of ours needed to tell Producer—now top executive—De Sylva that he is rolling in high, the box office tingle in the next few weeks would drown our words out anyway.

Harry Tugend contributed not only the original story but an excellent screenplay, with Wilkie C. Mahoney turning in a journeyman's quota of laugh lines on the additional dialogue assignment.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: Don't wait, don't write, don't walk—skedaddle to the nearest Paramount exchange for your dates. Previewed May 23rd.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

Reporter: "No critical appraisal of 'Caught in the Draft' need be very important to Paramount after its reception Friday night by the Glendale preview audience. The studio executives and publicity boys knew they had an attraction with the wild ovation of cheers that greeted the first title—and the second, carrying the name of the film. They knew they had a hit along about half way, when laughter was drowning out some of the lines. Its hit calibre was decisively proven by the applause at 'The End.'"

Variety: "Paramount's 'Caught in the Draft' is 82 minutes of enormous belly laughter, flippancy and fol-de-rol; 82 minutes of clever and brilliant writing; 82 minutes of admirable film construction, of Bob Hope at his drolly amiable best. Moreover, it is the answer to exhibitors prayers and ought to smash house records."

'Adventure In Washington' Will Satisfy

COLUMBIA

The Box Office Digest's Estimate
75%

Producer Charles R. Rogers
 Associate producer William A. Pierce
 Director Alfred E. Green
 Screenplay Lewis R. Foster, Arthur Caesar
 From story by Jeane Spencer, Albert Benham
 Stars Herbert Marshall, Virginia Bruce
 Featured: Gene Reynolds, Samuel S. Hinds, Ralph Morgan, Vaughan Glaser, Charles Smith, Dickie Jones, Pierre Watkin, J. M. Kerrigan, Tommy Bond, Billy Dawson, Charles Lind, Mary Currier.
 Photographer Henry Sharp, Allen G. Siegler
 Time 84 minutes

"Adventure in Washington" is a sort of "Boys Town" of the national capital. It is given value by the fact that behind the foreground of the Senate page boys there is the natural interest in the doings and human habits of the nation's law-makers at work.

The picture will give general satisfaction to family audiences, while not rising to the heights of Charles Rogers' previously pre-

viewed hit, "She Knew All the Answers." It has one great entertainment advantage—it is out of the formula that has shadowed so much of the past year's Hollywood product. Your audiences will welcome the feeling that they are seeing how a unique group of people eat, drink, sleep, and live with a sort of "behind the scenes" feeling.

Gene Reynolds, turning in a fine performance, keys the picture. He is the boy fighting up from a drab background, against obstacles, tough as they come, but tamed eventually to the discipline of the Senate page boys. There is an excellent group of youngsters in his support as the page boy group.

Action permits considerable intimacy with the workings of the legislators. Herbert Marshall is capable as usual in a Senator role; Virginia Bruce effective as a radio commentator who has considerable to do with the regeneration of Marshall's protege,

Reynolds.

The picture has considerable audience appeal, through being a combination of the sure fire's, the tough kid angle, a bit of the Annapolis formula, and glossed over with its Washington atmosphere.

Charles Rogers, and his associate producer, William A. Pierce, have two to their credit now that will not disappoint Columbia stockholders.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: Good family bet. Previewed May 22nd.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "'Adventure in Washington' must be reckoned one of Columbia's finest releases, of immense appeal to young and old."

VARIETY: "Columbia's 'Adventure in Washington', although it is without a pulsing, passionate love interest ought to fetch customers handsomely up to the box office window, for it is a warmly-human, gentle, tolerant and stirring picture of the dramatic lives led by page boys in the United States Senate. It is distinguished by good production, an excellent story and the splendid performance of young Gene Reynolds."

'Billy the Kid' Horse Opry on Grand Scale

MGM

The Box Office Digest's Estimate
140%

Producer Irving Asher
Director David Miller
Screenplay Gene Fowler
Story Howard Emmett Rogers,
Bradbury Foote
Star Robert Taylor

Featured: Brian Donlevy, Ian Hunter, Mary Howard, Gene Lockhart, Lon Chaney Jr., Henry O'Neill, Guinn Williams, Cy Kendall, Ted Adams, Frank Conlan, Frank Puglia, Mitchell Lewis, Dick Curtis, Grant Withers, Joe Yule, Earl Gunn, Eddie Dunn, Carl Pitti, Kermit Maynard, Ethel Griffies, Chill Wills, Olive Blakeney.

Photographers Leonard Smith,
William V. Skall
Time 94 minutes

If they keep on making "Billy the Kid" versions he will probably be a canonized saint before Hollywood turns to dust.

Metro dresses him up this time in Technicolor, borrows the State of Arizona for backgrounds, and gives Robert Taylor the tough assignment of being a toughie to the audience after having been a hero on the marquee for drawing power.

And the picture ends up as a glorified, in fact, magnified, Western, without any evidence of the skill that veteran makers of horse oprys show every week for one tenth the money.

Don't mistake us. The picture will be a money-maker. Big money. Our slightly roughened sensibilities are due to the fact that the great Leo heaved and sighed, huffed and puffed, and couldn't do a job to measure up to the money spent or the money that

the picture is automatically set to get at box offices.

Billy the Kid is given the vaguest of backgrounds here. He seems to be an accepted tough hombre, but no mention is made of any notches on his gun except to establish the fact that he killed a man who shot his father back in youngster days, when he and Brian Donlevy were boyhood pals.

The result of this vague background characterization is that Taylor has to work like the dickens with steely, glowery looks to establish the fact that he is the center of the action while the plot going round and round about him is straight San Fernando Valley.

But entertainment values are saved by Taylor's work, and by a fine job from Brian Donlevy. The duo, plus the scenery and the Technicolor, hold it together for a picture about which the customers won't complain too much.

Support is excellent, with Gene Lockhart, Ian Hunter, Lon Chaney, Jr., and Guinn Williams getting the best opportunities. Mary Howard does as best she can with a neutral role.

Director David Miller did not get a break on his first ace assignment. The story is ordinary Gower street, the script a bit worse, and probably because of complications between long shots taken on location and exterior shots of close action taken on stages, he never did have a chance to give the script anything.

There is a peculiar theatric effect about the backgrounds. Anyone who has seen the actual locations will revel in their beauty,

while the stranger will think he is seeing a backdrop. Anyone who knows pictures will snort at the studio taken exteriors, and the frequent hobby horse sequences where a couple of characters will talk for five minutes jouncing up and down before a projection background.

The story? Well, you've heard about "Billy the Kid." This time he just drifts into the range war in time to get hired by villain Lockhart, to be intrigued by Mary Howard, to be influenced by the valiant Englishman, Ian Hunter, to be prodded towards the course of righteousness by boyhood chum, Brian Donlevy, and lay down his life because he avenged the death of Ian Hunter.

Sounds complicated? Naw, it's simple. Just as simple as the fact that until they decide to kill Billy off for the fadeout they never do let him get his hair mussed.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: Marquee values and production assure it for money. Not hot for the women who are getting bewildered by this new Robert Taylor. Previewed May 22nd.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "It just doesn't seem to matter what you do to a Western it still comes out a western, and whether you spend \$500,000 or even more to make one, they all seem to wind up with about the same story that has the same entertainment values."

VARIETY: "Men are bound to like the picture. It catrionize it heavily, and women will probably like it also, for it has much more of all 'round dramatic appeal than the pattern which the title might suggest. Strong cast, headed by the Taylor-Donlevy names will help greatly."

'Million Dollar Baby' Has Its Moments

WARNERS

The Digest's Box Office Estimate
90%

Executive Producer Hal Wallis
Associate Producer David Lewis
Director Curtis Bernhardt
Screenplay—Casey Robinson, Richard Macaulay,
Jerry Wald.
Original Leonard Spigelgass
Stars Priscilla Lane, Jeffrey Lynn

Featured: Ronald Reagan, May Robson, Lee Patrick, Helen Westley, George Barbier, Nan Wynn, John Qualen, Walter Catlett, Fay Helm, Richard Carle, John Ridgely, Maris Wrixon, James Burke, Charles Halton, John Sheffield.

Photographer Charles Rocher
Time 100 Minutes

For three quarters of its route "Million Dollar Baby" rolls along as rollicking entertainment. If you happened in on the picture at its start, and were suddenly called away at that three-quarter point you would leave reluctantly.

But the remaining few reels found the necessity of going preachy on the joys of poverty, and as a result the action drags, while the scripters try in vain to wind it up.

Ordinarily, if a picture is just plain bad it is easy to forget it; but "Million Dollar Baby" in so many ways sparkles with originality of presentation, its cast is so happily at home, that you resent the fact that someone

did not see the danger signal "Overlength" ahead, with its accompanying bugaboo, story troubles.

The picture is overlength. That is definite. The story trouble is two-fold. One fault is that Jeffrey Lynn and Ronald Reagan, both vying for the favor of Priscilla Lane, are both made so definitely likeable and equally deserving of the girl, that the scripters—and the audience—run into troubles trying to iron the situation out.

The second fault is the attempt to combine comedy with preachiness. Everything is crisp, sharp, and refreshingly different until the element of platitudes intrudes.

Director Curtis Bernhardt's work has a definite uniqueness. He manages, and in this qualification he enters the field of Preston Sturges, to get the human, or seemingly real, outlook on situations that may have been screened time and time again.

The cast is tops. Priscilla Lane is a knockout in a role that is tailored to her measure. She has a vim and effervescence that jump from the screen to the audience. Jeffrey Lynn, in a tough assignment, loosens up to such extent that you find yourself wishing he will get the girl. It is the first time that Lynn has really looked at home before a camera. Ronald Reagan's personality is so

sure-fire that it would probably be impossible to miscast him; he wraps up this role playing in competition with such wily veterans as Helen Westley and May Robson.

The story finds May Robson trying to right a wrong committed by her deceased father and give a million dollars to Priscilla Lane, department store worker. But there are complications about making the gift. Miss Robson goes to live in the boarding house conducted by Helen Westley in order to learn more about the girl's character. And when the transfer of the million is finally made, Priscilla temporarily loses the man she loves, and all sorts of things happen. That's when we get the "happiness through poverty" theme.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: Despite its faults, stacks up as fun above the average. Previewed May 21st.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

Reporter: "From an original story by Leonard Spigelgass, once titled "Miss Wheelwright Discovers America," Warners has made a very funny show, now called "Million Dollar Baby"—which is a gilt-edged boxoffice entertainment buy."

Variety: "Here is a rollicking bit of nonsense that hides a lot of heart beneath its foolishness and seems destined to capture a considerable quantity of its title dollars at the boxoffice. 'Million Dollar Baby' is brimful of fun and some spicy lines that gathered gasps from the preview audience."

'Shining Victory' Well Made For the Class Trade

WARNERS

The Digest's Box Office Estimate
75%

Executive Producer.....Hal Wallis
Associate Producer.....Robert Lord
Director.....Irving Rapper
Screenplay.....Howard Koch, Anne Froelik
Original Play.....A. J. Cronin
Stars.....James Stephenson, Geraldine Fitzgerald
Featured: Donald Crisp, Barbara O'Neil, Montagu Love, Sig Rumann, George P. Huntley, Jr., Richard Ainley, Bruce Lester, Leonard Mudie, Doris Lloyd, Frank Reicher, Hermine Sterler, Billy Bevan, Clare Verdera, Crawford Kent, Alec Craig.
Photographer.....James Wong Howe
Time.....86 Minutes

"Shining Victory" is technically a fine achievement; as entertainment, it presents some problems, because of its basic theme, though skillful handling has been given that theme.

The story, by A. J. Cronin, is a sort of medical "Dr. Chips" in pace and intelligence. Its principal character, portrayed by James Stephenson, is a medico seeking a miracle cure for the feeble-minded. This isn't exactly cheerful entertainment thought. And no attempt is made to lighten it in the script.

Stephenson has buried himself in a Scottish sanitarium, where he is given as assistant

a woman doctor, Geraldine Fitzgerald. He resents having a feminine helper, in fact seems to resent almost everybody and everything for the course of the picture while his one track mind seeks his scientific goal.

But love finds its way to the master and assistant, and just when they are about to win personal happiness and professional success through his final experiments, a jealous fellow worker, Barbara O'Neill, sets fire to his laboratory. Geraldine saves his precious records at the cost of her life. He sets off for China to find happiness in the medical missionary work which had been her goal.

No, it doesn't quite add up to entertainment.

But it is technically a very excellent job of picture making. Irving Rapper, newly elevated to a director's worries, definitely exhibits imagination, ability to create a mood, and to get the best from his players. Rapper has arrived in one jump.

Two superb performances highlight the picture, with the support not far behind. Stephenson measures up fully to the adjectives bestowed on him in "The Letter," and Miss Fitzgerald gives a warm quality to her

characterization of his assistant. Barbara O'Neill, playing the jealous neurotic is so real as to be remembered with something of a shudder after you have forgotten some of the other characters. Capable Donald Crisp and Montagu Love give that touch of class to the casting that you can always expect when you read their names on the credit title.

And production values are all topped by a superb photographic contribution from James Wong Howe.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: Not mass entertainment, but a fine bet for class audiences. Previewed May 20th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "There can be little criticism of the manner in which this A. J. Cronin story has been translated to the screen. The picture shows the care and intelligence expended upon its making. It is uniformly well performed by an able cast, and directed with distinction by Irving Rapper. Yet exhibitors must face the fact that audience appeal is limited for any such medical study."

VARIETY: "'Shining Victory' is distinguished by top flight performances, easy direction and production, and neat scripting to mark it as a capable dramatic entry sure to find favor with nearly every type audience."

'Time Out For Rhythm' Bargain Counter Musical

COLUMBIA

The Digest's Box Office Estimate
75%

Producer.....Irving Starr
Director.....Sidney Salkow
Screenplay.....Edmund L. Hartmann, Bert Lawrence
Story by.....Bert Granet
Based on a play by.....Alex Ruben
Stars.....Ann Miller, Rudy Vallee
Featured: Rosemary Lane, Allen Jenkins, Joan Merrill, Richard Lane, Stanley Andrews, and the Three Stooges, Brenda and Cobina, Six Hits and a Miss, Glen Gray and His Casa Loma Band, Eddie Durant's Rhumba Orchestra.
Photographer.....Franz. F. Planer
Time.....74 Minutes

If they had only made up their minds this might have been a picture. But they couldn't decide whether it was to be a musical or a saccharine sentimental drama, and the result is that the dramatic side takes the reins and the thing goes overboard.

Honest, we are not kidding. They set out to use the name of Rudy Vallee, which means music, for the box office draw, they pull in a capable group of comics, a couple

of personable girlies, and then they go for a story that becomes heavily dramatic. almost to the sobbing point. The clash between the supposed aim at light musical comedy and the struggle for dramatics is just too much.

Rudy Vallee has again been given one of those parts. He must hold the reins by his showmanship, but his role is one that would tax the ability of anyone. Ann Miller is okay in the dance numbers, and these numbers would have been much better received if the picture was cut-and-cut musical comedy. Rosemary Lane is in a thankless characterization, that of "the other woman." She does adequately with what is given her, but she is too darn nice to be cast this way.

There are some comedy high spots in the film, of these, Allen Jenkins steals the lion's share. This Jenkins boy is one of the best secondary leads on the screen, either seen as a tough gangster, as he is most frequently, or as here, doing a hailfellow piano player.

Dick Lane is too much an actor for this material.

The Three Stooges, always safe for laughs, carry the camel's burden. They get plenty of laughs here, and save the show from being a washout.

Sidney Salkow did his best with the direction, but the scripters didn't give him much chance. It is one of those song writer-back-stage-what-have-you yarns. You've seen it before. We won't take up any more space.

Exhibitors Booking Suggestion: Since it is only a B on the price schedule may get by as a filler. But don't be oversold, or spot it too importantly. Previewed May 26th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "Imagine Columbia's B picture action formula applied to a musical. There is 'Time Out for Rhythm' in a nutshell. It's the studio's first out-and-out venture into the field of tunes and taps and it comes off well."

VARIETY: "'Time Out for Rhythm' stacks up as average musical entertainment that will be able to carry top billing only outside of key city first runs."

FOR REVIEWS
THAT SAY
SOMETHING

Box
Office
Digest

Now Forming:



BATTALION

Military Training School

OPEN TO ALL MEN BETWEEN THE AGES OF 21 AND 50.

A COURSE OF PHYSICAL AND MILITARY
PREPAREDNESS FOR THOSE WHO ARE
INTERESTED.

ALL DRAFTEES IN CLASS 1A RECEIVE
UNIFORM EQUIPMENT—BOOKS AND TU-
ITION GRATIS—TO THE NON-DRAFTEE
THERE IS A TUITION FEE OF \$4 PER
MONTH, PLUS \$7.00 FOR YOUR UNI-
FORM, BOOKS AND EQUIPMENT.

THE SCHOOL WILL BE UNDER THE SUP-
ERVISION OF A U. S. ARMY RESERVE OF-
FICER AND ITS MAIN MISSION IS TO
GIVE THE DRAFTEE A LIFT OVER THE
BUMPS.

THERE IS NO ENLISTMENT PERIOD.

Class and Drill Schedule

Monday, Wednesday, Friday
8 to 10 P. M.

Further Particulars

BATTALION HEADQUARTERS
1718 N. VINE ST.
HOLLYWOOD

What Happened

THIS WEEK ?

The Week's Best Treat:

After a surfeit of screwball comedies and marriage mix-ups, to view Zanuck's "Blood and Sand." . . . Solid entertainment of the perennial school, packing the good old dramatic wallop, and dressed up like a million in its Technicolor . . . Even the players seemed to enjoy having something real to do . . . In these days when everybody is at wits' end trying to outguess the fickle public we predict this one will cash in big on its unique spot.

The Week's Dunkerque:

The producers have retired in fair order from the preview squabble . . . In other words the situation is back pretty much where it started . . . The center aisle seats are again being reserved for the studio stooges and friends of the boss, the same synthetic applause is being given each credit title and first appearance, the cash audiences are giving it the same razzing . . . And the press boys are considering renting a couple of bungalows in Glendale for permanent quarters . . . They can save on frayed dispositions, gas, wear and tear, and telegraph bills.

The Week's Interesting Team:

The combination of Priscilla Lane and Ronald Reagan in "Million Dollar Baby." . . . They make a great duo, having both personality and selling a terrific feeling of pep from off that screen . . . We are missing a bet if you do not hear that Warners have decided to team them more often . . . And if we miss that bet, then Warners is missing the bigger one . . . It's their money . . . But the profits in a human, rollicking team these days would be plenty.

The Week's Discoveries:

The boys are beginning to rediscover Ray Bolger, after his fine contribution to "Sunny." . . . In which, as a matter of fact he didn't get any too fat opportunities, but just enough to tease 'em again . . . Some day some wise producer will discover the way to utilize the showmanship that is in the Bolger head and his toes . . . Another interesting discovery, and this one sneaked up on the industry: Irving Rapper, director of "Shining Victory." . . . The boy has a lot on the ball.

All Major Features Released in 1941

A

OVER \$500,000

Philadelphia Story	MGM	181
Road to Zanzibar	PAR	157
Ziegfeld Girl	MGM	150
Meet John Doe	WAR	144
Kitty Foyle	RKO	143
Tobacco Road	FOX	138
That Hamilton Woman	UA	133
Western Union	FOX	132
Men of Boys Town	MGM	131
That Night in Rio	FOX	131
Penny Serenade	COL	131
Back Street	UNIV	126
Strawberry Blonde	WAR	124
Lady Eve	PAR	120
Nice Girl?	UNIV	120
Virginia	PAR	120
The Great Lie	WAR	118
Mr. and Mrs. Smith	RKO	118
Flight Command	MGM	115
The Devil and Miss Jones	RKO	115
The Sea Wolf	WAR	112
Great American Broadcast	FOX	111
Come Live With Me	MGM	107
Hudson's Bay	FOX	103
Pot O' Gold	UA	100
Lady From Cheyenne	UNIV	92
Flame of New Orleans	UNIV	87
Son of Monte Cristo	UA	87
That Uncertain Feeling	UA	85
So Ends Our Night	UA	85
Victory	PAR	82

B

FROM \$200,000 TO \$500,000

Andy Hardy's Private Secretary	MGM	133
This Thing Called Love	COL	125
High Sierra	WAR	110

Cheers for Miss Bishop	UA	90
Footsteps In The Dark	WAR	86
Tall Dark and Handsome	FOX	86
Adam Had Four Sons	COL	86
Bad Man	MGM	86
Wagon's Rolls at Night	WAR	85
Topper Returns	UA	84
Maidie Was a Lady	MM	83
Mad Doctor	PAR	81
A Girl, A Guy, and a Gob	RKO	80
Model Wife	UNIV	80
Reaching for the Sun	PAR	80
Texas Rangers Ride Again	PAR	78
Invisible Woman	UNIV	78
People vs. Dr. Kildare	MGM	78
Three on a Honeymoon	WAR	77
Round Up	PAR	77
Las Vegas Nights	WAR	76
Flight from Destiny	PAR	76
Sis Hopkins	REP	76
They Met in Argentina	RKO	75
The Penalty	MGM	74
Man Who Lost Himself	UNIV	74
Washington Melodrama	MGM	74
You're the One	PAR	73
Romance of the Rio Grande	FOX	73
Ronde Inspiration	MGM	73
Black Cat	UNIV	72
Rage in Heaven	MGM	72
Life with Henry	PAR	72
Golden Hoofs	FOX	72
Road Show	UA	71
Keeping Company	MGM	71
Murder Among Friends	FOX	70
Wild Man of Borneo	MGM	70

Hard Boiled Canary	PAR	63
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C

FROM \$100,000 TO \$200,000

Buck Privates	UNIV	108
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Six Lessons from Madame LaZonga	UNIV	80
Ellery Queen, Master Detective	COL	80
Ellery Queen Penthouse Mystery	COL	78
Blondie Goes Latin	COL	76
Her First Beau	COL	75
Scotland Yard	FOX	72
Phantom Submarine	COL	72
Play Girl	RKO	72
Trial of Mary Dugan	MGM	72
A Dangerous Game	UNIV	72
Man Made Monster	UNIV	72
Ride on Vaquero	FOX	71
Double Date	UNIV	71
Face Behind the Mask	COL	71
Ride, Kelly, Ride	FOX	71
Roston Island	COL	71
Horror Black	UNIV	70
Mutiny in the Arctic	UNIV	70
Dead Men Tell	FOX	70
Free and Easy	MGM	70
Devil Commands	COL	70
Sleepers West	FOX	70
The Monster and the Girl	WAR	70
Great Mr. Nobody	PAR	70
Lucky Devils	UNIV	70
Where Did You Get That Girl	UNIV	70
Convoy	RKO	70
She Couldn't Say No	WAR	70
Michael Shayne, Private Detective	FOX	70
The Case of the Black Parrot	WAR	70
Mr. Dynamite	UNIV	70
A Man Betrayed	REP	70
Lone Wolf Takes A Chance	COL	70
Melody For Three	RKO	70
Let's Make Music	RKO	68
Meet the Chump	UNIV	68
Knockout	WAR	68
Saint in Palm Springs	RKO	67
Father's Son	WAR	67
Strange Alibi	WAR	66
Repent at Leisure	RKO	66
Shadow on the Stairs	WAR	64
Scattergood Baines	RKO	64
Girl in The News	FOX	62

Power Dive	PAR	78
Under Age	COL	71
Roar of the Press	MONO	70
Barnyard Folies	REP	69
Bowery Boy	REP	68
Petticoat Politics	REP	68
Phantom of Chinatown	MONO	67
Arkansas Judge	REP	67
Great Train Robbery	REP	66
Sign of The Wolf	MONO	66
Mr. District Attorney	REP	66
Land of Liberty	MGM	65
Chamber of Horrors	MONO	65
Footlight Fever	RKO	64
Missing Ten Days	COL	63
Pride of the Bowery	MONO	63
Flying Wild	MONO	62
Her First Romance	MONO	62
You're Out of Luck	MONO	62
The Old Swimming Hole	MONO	60

D

BELOW \$100,000



THE BATTING AVERAGES

1941

Producers and Associate Producers

	Pictures	%
Joseph Mankiewicz	1	181
Pan Berman	1	150
David Hempstead	1	143
Paul Jones	2	139
Harry Joe Brown	1	132
John Considine	1	131
Bruce Manning	1	126
William Perlberg	1	125
William Cagney	1	124
Frank Ross	1	112
Mark Hellinger	1	110
Fred Kohlmar	2	109
Alex Gottlieb	1	108
Kenneth Macgowan	2	107
Joseph Pasternak	2	104
Henry Blanke	3	103

Producer-Directors

	Pictures	%
Frank Capra	1	144
Alexander Korda	1	133
George Stevens	1	131
E. H. Griffith	1	120
Clarence Brown	1	107

Actresses

	Pictures	%
Ginger Rogers	1	143
Vivien Leigh	1	133
Barbara Stanwyck	2	132
Irene Dunne	1	131
Rosalind Russell	1	125
Olivia de Havilland	1	124
Alice Faye	2	121
Deanna Durbin	1	120
Madeleine Carroll	1	120
Bette Davis	1	118
Carole Lombard	1	118
Jean Arthur	1	112
Ida Lupino	1	110
Hedy Lamarr	1	107
Margaret Sullavan	2	106
Paulette Goddard	1	100



Directors

	Pictures	%
George Cukor	1	181
Victor Schertzinger	1	157
Robert Leonard	1	150
John Ford	1	138
George B. Seitz	1	133
Fritz Lang	1	132
Norman Taurog	1	131
Irving Cummings	1	131
Sam Wood	2	128
Robert Stevenson	1	126
Al Hall	1	125
William Seiter	1	120
Preston Sturges	1	120
Edmund Goulding	1	118
Alfred Hitchcock	1	118
Raoul Walsh	2	117
Frank Borzage	1	115
Michal Curtiz	1	112
Archie Mayo	1	111
Irving Pichel	1	103
George Marshall	1	100

Actors

	Pictures	%
Bing Crosby	1	157
Bob Hope	1	157
Cary Grant	2	156
Gary Cooper	1	144
James Stewart	4	134
Laurence Olivier	1	133
Mickey Rooney	2	132
Randolph Scott	1	132
Spencer Tracy	1	131
Don Ameche	1	131
Charles Boyer	1	126
James Cagney	1	124
Fred MacMurray	1	120
Henry Fonda	1	120
Robert Taylor	1	115
Edward G. Robinson	1	112
Abbott and Costello	1	108
Paul Muni	1	103
Robert Young	2	102



THE HONOR BOX WINNER

George Stevens

"Penny Serenade"

A COLUMBIA PICTURE

Box Office

DIGEST

VOLUME 12, NO. 25

HOLLYWOOD, CALIF., JUNE 7, 1941



CURRENT PREVIEWS

IN THE NAVY

MAN HUNT

OUT OF THE FOG

SINGAPORE WOMAN

WEST POINT WIDOW

ANGELS WITH BROKEN
WINGS

PAPER BULLETS

KNOCKOUT

★
25c

*The Box Office
Reports:*

**Honors Go
to 'Blood
and Sand'**

See Page 5

The Box Office

DIGEST "HONOR BOX"

The Biggest Grossing Release Of The Past Week

This Week FOX wins with

"BLOOD and SAND" 128%



Vice President in Charge of
Production
DARRYL F. ZANUCK



Associate Producer
ROBERT T. KANE



Director
ROUBEN MAMOULIAN

Based on Novel by
VICENTE BLASCO IBANEZ

Photographers
ERNEST PALMER
RAY RENNAHAN

Technicolor Director
NATALIE KALMUS

Associate Technicolor Director
MORGAN RADELFORD



TYRONE POWER

Featured

ANTHONY QUINN
NAZIMOVA
JOHN CARRADINE
LYNN BARI
VICENTE GOMES
WILLIAM MONTAGUE
GEORGE REEVES
PEDRO DE CORDOBA
FORTUNIA BONANOVA
VICTOR KILIAN



RITA HAYWORTH



J. CARROL NAISH



LAIRD CREGAR



LINDA DARNELL

The Box Office DIGEST

The Industry's
Distinctive Weekly

KILL THE CLUCKS

An Editorial by ROBERT E. WELSH

We gave a solemn promise last week that we would eliminate further worrisome discussion of the box office nose-dive for some time to come.

So we crawl in apologetically to renew the subject this week. Because the drop continues so precipitously that it is a serious industry problem which cannot be ignored nor treated with the wishful thinking we all love which whispers: "Shucks, don't worry, in a couple of weeks conditions will change, and everybody will forget that they ever had a headache."

We have another reason for renewing these humble discussions about the problem.

For several weeks now we have been conducting a sort of miniature Gallup poll through our box office reporters in the principal key cities, with their instructions being:

"Don't ask the exhibitor or the distribution man why business is bad—ask your brother-in-law, your cousin, and Aunt Fanny, your neighbors, why they are not going to the movies."

We have come to a conclusion that should not be mentioned by a trade paper. Because we are sticking our chin out, and we will not have a friend to help us in production, distribution or exhibition.

★ ★ ★

It could be expected that the first answer to the question we told our representatives to propound would be a generalization. Merging them all together they went like this:

"Well, the wife and I and the kid saw a couple of pictures last month, and they weren't so hot. 'Course, we ain't stopped going to the theater, but we call our shots now. It's safer to stay home at the radio, cause that doesn't cost anything, and you can take your shoes off."

But further questioning of these people brought the admission that they are still not missing the good attractions—the ones that are big in the size and ballyhoo, or big through the friendly word-of-mouth of a neighbor.

That is—they are not missing them WHEN THEY KNOW ABOUT THEM!

And then, in 74% of the reports from our representatives there crept in the nub of our talk this week.

Which is the point at which we stick out our chin.

THE TICKET-BUYING HABIT—the life-blood of this entertainment fodder industry—has been killed by the admission prices.

The customer is not complaining, nor growing apathetic towards our wares, because of paying a rightful price for a good attraction.

He is getting fed up, and acquiring lethargy towards our wares, when he has to pay the SAME price for tripe as for caviar, and when he gets mumbling after six months or so that there is more tripe than caviar.

That is what has him putting his meager chips on the assurance of the radio—which can give him Bing Crosby, Bob Hope, or Jack Benny without making a dent in the bread and butter money.

And the whole trouble is the system.

Production costs for big pictures are such now that none would suggest that the picture industry should go on a bargain basement campaign to slash ticket prices all over the country indiscriminately on all pictures.

But we are in a position of asking the customer to pay a STANDARD price for everything he buys from us, whether it be butter today or oleomargarine tomorrow, and we hope he will like the oleo so much that he will come back next week for our butter. Or vica versa, take it or leave it.

★ ★ ★

What about those prices?

Leaving aside those very few top key houses where it costs the equivalent of the week's milk bill to go to the movies one night, this can be said of the majority of important centers:

The average price of admission is fifty-five cents. Let's forget that a few American families have children. The lone husband starts out for the theater with his wifey and \$1.10 is chalked against him. In most communities he then has a parking fee to pay, or—what may be worse on his nerves—a quarter hour of second gear driving to find a niche against a curb.

Accepting the possibility that he may not have to spend any more money on his "night out" for the wifey—or the gal friend—what happens when the theater presents one of those pictures that the trade

(Continued on Page 19)

DISTRIBUTORS' BATTING AVERAGE FOR 1941

		%
1. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer	20 Releases	95
2. United Artists	8 Releases	91
3. Twentieth Century-Fox	17 Releases	88
4. Paramount	15 Releases	88
5. Warners-First National	19 Releases	84
6. RKO-Radio	13 Releases	82
7. Universal	19 Releases	80
8. Columbia	17 Releases	78
9. Republic	9 Releases	68
10. Monogram	10 Releases	64

The Highlighter: **Covers the Picture News Front in a Quick Glance**

Here is a letter written by a veteran figure in exhibition to a prominent Hollywood producer-director, that supersedes anything in the ordinary news Highlights of the week. . . . The writer is P. J. Wood, executive secretary of the Independent Theater Owners of Ohio, who has been chaperon, guardian, and vigilante for the interests of his flock for more years than he would care to have us mention. . . . The recipient was Frank Capra, who recently made something of a top motion picture entertainment. We now leave you to the letter:

**MR. FRANK CAPRA,
WARNER BROS. STUDIOS:**

"You have undoubtedly heard that the motion picture box office is sick and, as one who has shown by his past performance that he has a vital interest in the industry, it must give you considerable concern.

Last week, in Cleveland, the theater owners of Ohio held a meeting to discuss the whys and wherefores of the situation and many in attendance attributed our sick box office to the fact that too much quantity of entertainment is being forced upon our customers, and I am tempted to agree with them because of a recent experience of my own.

"On May 23rd, I happened to be in Springfield, Ohio, and with nothing to do that evening I dropped in at Warner's Majestic Theater to see 'MEET JOHN DOE.' I entered the theater at about the third reel of 'ROOKIES ON PARADE,' after which I was compelled to suffer through nearly two hours of 'SO ENDS OUR NIGHT' in order to reach what I had paid to see—'MEET JOHN DOE.'

"I left the theater suffering from an aggravated case of 'motion picture indigestion' and, frankly, I can't tell you whether or not I enjoyed your picture. . . . Cordially yours, P. J. Wood."

**OMIGOSH—WHAT POSSIBLE
EARTHQUAKES AHEAD!**

Aside from the straight all-industrial thoughts that will be prompted by this letter from an exhibitor-minded veteran, who apparently is still a fan, can you imagine what it is going to mean in Hollywood? . . . Where our best creative brains have been showing more and more willingness to make producer-director deals in which they gambled along with everybody else on their confidence in ability to deliver box office? . . . There have been rumbles already, mentioned many months ago by that 12 pt. Editorial Page, that all was not kosher on the producer-director front. . . . But how would you like to be Frank Capra—along with a dozen or so others—and learn that your top attraction, on which you had sacrificed direct income

for a gamble, was being peddled on bills that sent the patron home saying: "I had motion picture indigestion; I can't tell you whether or not I enjoyed your picture." . . . And the worst of it being that the theater in which the sufferer bore his agony bears the name of your partner-distributor. . . . But aside from this particular instance, we can issue a warning to the tops that there must be a change in the method of selling and SHOWMANSHIP on these producer-director-partner deals or they will soon be back where they started from. . . . With the ace directors—especially considering what income taxes are and will be—saying: "To heck with gambling where I do all the gambling; my price per picture is so-much, and I'm not concerned about whether I do one or two this year."

**GETTING BACK TO THE
NEWS ITEMS OF THE WEEK**

There could be many more columns than we have lines to spare to tell of the doings of the Motion Picture Theater Owners Convention, held in conjunction with the gathering of the Pacific Independents. . . . But shucks, most of it is the usual convention stuff—"everybody is having a good time"—grand arrival, visits to studios, barbeques, visits to hotel rooms manned by the glad hand boys, speeches, resolutions, departure. . . . Since the boys are a day away from the important resolutions as this rolls to press we can let our experienced readers' imaginations fill in all the early details. . . . Except there is something for thought in the disappointment over the exhibitor attendance from out of state. . . . We hinted some fears about this three or four weeks ago when we said that some of our letters told us some of the showmen would be here IF the big doldrums would dissipate. . . . But the doom-dooms must have prevented a number of well intentioned organization exhibitors from buying those railroad tickets and forecasting those hotel and incidental expenses that go with a convention. . . . Including the ability to toy with paste-boards or galloping cubes in a carefree manner.

**JOGGING HERE AND THERE
ON DIRECTOR'S BEAT**

The Pipeline reports are coming in on quite a few of the pictures in the making that give hot promise. . . . Down at Twentieth-Fox they are all worked up about prospects on the picture Irving Cummings is directing, "Belle Starr." . . . And the interest of the press critics has been whetted by receipt of volumes of the Burton Rascoe book on which the story is based. . . . For which advance appetite Harry Brand is responsible. . . . Over at MGM they say that Norman McLeod, directing "Lady Be Good," has given MGM a Grade A star

with the response he got from Ann Sothern. . . . The Pipeline hums that Mark Sandrich has a top one coming along in "Skylark," with Claudette Colbert in the marquee spot. . . . Funny to realize that this is the first straight comedy Mark has directed after so many years at musical comedies. . . . They used to hear whispers that Lewis Milestone was not a woman's director, and now the Pipeline murmurs that he is giving the screen a new star in Anna Lee, who is playing opposite such tough competition as Ronald Colman. . . . The picture is "My Life With Caroline." . . . George Marshall, who took quite a tough bout on with the hospitals last year, and then a tougher one making "Pot O' Gold" really entertaining, is back in full stride. . . . Marshall, who last slammed a couple of home runs with "Destiny Rides Again" and "The Last of the Daltons" is ready to go now on "Valley of the Sun" for RKO. We don't know just what happens in valleys of the sun, but we can guarantee that Marshall will make it exciting. . . . And one of these days some wise producer is going to give Marshall a real piece of material—instead of those ones he has to save with gags and pace. . . . Glad to hear that Buddy DeSylva has called Frank Tuttle back to the wars to do a suspense meller, "This Gun For Hire," because we have fine recollections of his red-meat opus, "The Glass Key," from the Dashiell Hammett story. . . . Tuttle is another of those craftsmen—bobs up one year with musically backgrounded pictures like "Waikiki Wedding," "Dr. Rhythm," then can swing all the way to meller.

**CONTINUING AROUND THE
STUDIO CIRCUIT**

Over at Columbia we found them enthusiastic, in the midst of all the box office depression news, over the hold-over record being run up by George Stevens' production "Penny Serenade." . . . The figures form something of an oasis in present general conditions. . . . Toppers are a current third week at the industry's showcase in New York, the Music Hall, and a third week in progress at the Oriental, Chicago. . . . Pipeline reports are sizzling on Warner's "Sergeant York," just delivered by Howard Hawks. . . . Hawks has an interesting directional assignment coming up—a Gary Cooper starrer for Sam Goldwyn, "The Professor and the Burlesque Team." . . . provocative title but where do they make rubber stretching marquees? The whispers promise something good in "Unfinished Business" which Gregory La Cava presented to Universal. . . . Irene Dunne and Robert Montgomery are co-starred. . . . They say it's La Cava's best since "Stage Door."

The Box Office: "Blood and Sand" Tops Though Slump Continues

Of 12 New Releases in the Past Week,
4 Ran Over 100%, 1 Came Through
Okay, and 7 Were Very Weak

EDITOR'S NOTE: In the past ten days theatre receipts from coast to coast have dropped off on a very alarming scale. We mentioned this last week and since then it has been stated repeatedly more or less in headlines in the various trade publications. We have been recording box office figures for approximately five years but have never seen such a landslide as has taken place in the last two weeks. Accordingly, pictures that would generally run from 145% to 150% are running about 25% to 30% lower. Big million dollar productions such as Twentieth Century-Fox's "Blood and Sand," Paramount's "I Wanted Wings" and Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's "Love Crazy" under even half normal conditions should all be doing very much better.

FOX—1 Release

Twentieth Century-Fox takes top honors this week with Darryl F. Zanuck's big Technicolor special "BLOOD AND SAND" starring Tyrone Power. This picture has opened in several key cities and is currently averaging 128%, which is not bad considering the terrific slump and yet away below normal for this fine type of production. Old time exhibitors and fans as well will undoubtedly remember the original "BLOOD AND SAND" starring Rudolph Valentino and what a sensation it was a decade ago.

Linda Darnell is seen as Powers' wife with Rita Hayworth playing the other woman and the featured cast is headed by J. Carroll Naish, John Carradine, Laird Cregar, Lynn Bari, Nazimova and Tony Quinn.

Robert T. Kane, formerly in charge of Twentieth Century-Fox's English productions, acted as associate producer to Darryl F. Zanuck and Rouben Mamoulian directed.

PARAMOUNT—1 Release

Paramount's only new release this week is their big air epic of today's aviation industry "I WANTED WINGS". This picture was previewed some time back and for the past few months has been running as a road show in New York City and has just been generally released in the past two weeks. Considering the terrific box office slump it is not doing so badly at a 121% average, yet that is much below what we had anticipated. With all the current interest in aviation "I WANTED WINGS" should certainly be doing much better business.

The aviators are Ray Milland, William Holden, Wayne Morris and Brian Donlevy with Constance Moore and a new-comer, Veronica Lake, upholding the feminine end.

Mitchell Leisen directed and Arthur

36 FEATURES "GOING DOWN"

	Was	Now
Meet John Doe	WAR 144	137
Tobacco Road	FOX 138	130
That Hamilton Woman	UA 133	128
Penny Serenade	COL 131	127
That Night in Rio	FOX 131	127
Nice Girl	UNIV 120	118
The Devil and Miss Jones	RKO 115	110
Great American Broadcast	FOX 111	106
Pot O Gold	UA 100	96
Hudson's Bay	FOX 103	94
Lady From Cheyenne	UNIV 92	86
That Uncertain Feeling	UA 85	83
Adam Had Four Sons	COL 86	82
Flame of New Orleans	UNIV 87	80
Victory	PAR 82	78
Tall, Dark and Handsome	FOX 86	78
Model Wife	UNIV 80	76
People vs. Dr. Kildare	MGM 78	76
Ellery Queen, Master Detective	COL 80	73
Reaching for the Sun	PAR 80	73
Her First Beau	COL 75	72
Washington Melodrama	MGM 74	72
Black Cat	UNIV 72	70
Flight From Destiny	WAR 76	70
Man Who Lost Himself	UNIV 74	70
Rage in Heaven	MGM 72	70
A Man Betrayed	REP 70	68
Wild Man of Borneo	MGM 70	68
They Met in Argentine	RKO 75	67
Mr. Dynamite	UNIV 70	67
Roar of the Press	MONO 70	67
The Penalty	MGM 74	69
Murder Among Friends	FOX 70	66
Melody for Three	RKO 70	64
Great Train Robbery	REP 66	64
Land of Liberty	MGM 65	63

Hornblow, Jr. produced under William LeBaron's supervision.

In aviation production centers this picture will probably pull much better business.

MGM—2 Releases

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios have two fine new productions this week, both of which are feeling the effect of the national box office slump. The best of these is the new William Powell-Myrna Loy production "LOVE CRAZY" which is only averaging 113%.

This is approximately 25% below what the former Powell-Loy pictures have averaged, particularly the "Thin Man" series.

The featured cast is headed by Gail Patrick, Jack Carson, Sidney Blackmer and Sigmund Rumann. Jack Conway directed for Producer Pan Berman.

MGM's second release is the new Joan Crawford production "THE WOMAN'S FACE," 106%. This picture started off much stronger but like the rest, felt the effect of the slump and dropped down to its 106% level.

Melvyn Douglas is seen opposite Miss

Crawford and the featured cast is headed by Conrad Veidt, Ona Massen, Reginald Owen and Marjorie Main. George Cukor directed and Victor Saville produced.

WARNERS—3 Releases

Warners-First National Studios have three new releases, one a fairly good feature and two very weak programmers.

Warners' best is "AFFECTIONATELY YOURS", 80%, a new domestic comedy with Merle Oberon, Dennis Morgan and Rita Hayworth. While this picture isn't up to the Warner "A" standard these three box office names should certainly pull better than an 80% house. The supporting players include Ralph Bellamy, George Tobias, James Gleason and Hattie McDaniel. Lloyd Bacon directed and Mark Hellinger was associate producer to Hal Wallis.

Warners' second and third releases are a couple of programmers from the Bryan Foy unit. "THIEVES FALL OUT," 64%, features Eddie Albert, Joan Leslie, Alan Hale and Jane Darwell. Edmund Grainger acted as associate producer and Ray Enright directed.

Warners' third and last release is "A SHOT IN THE DARK," 62%, with William Lundigan, Anne Gwynne, Ricardo Cortez and Regis Toomey. This detective melodrama was directed by William McGann and William Jacobs was the associate producer.

COLUMBIA—Also 3 Releases

Columbia Studios also have three new releases, one that is going over fairly well, while the other two just so-so programmers.

"THEY DARE NOT LOVE" is a much better than average picture out of Columbia but due to its anti-Nazi theme it is not faring any too well at a 77% average. Exhibitors should play up the romance angle over the

(Continued on Page 19)

12 NEW RELEASES NOT IN LAST ISSUE

	%	Est.
Blood and Sand	FOX 130	150
I Wanted Wings	PAR 121	140
Love Crazy	MGM 118	130
A Woman's Face	MGM 106	105
Affectionately Yours	WAR 80	85
They Dare Not Love	COL 77	85
The Great Swindle	COL 70	75
Rookies on Parade	REP 64	75
Thieves Fall Out	WAR 64	65
Invisible Ghost	MONO 62	65
Shot in the Dark	WAR 62	65
The Big Boss	COL 61	65

TYRONE
POWER

...as Juan, the matador of
Vicente Blasco Ibanez' immortal novel...

BLOOD
and SAND

IN **TECHNICOLOR**

with

LINDA

RITA

DARNELL • HAYWORTH

Nazimova • Anthony Quinn • J. Carrol Naish • John
Carradine • Lynn Bari • Laird Cregar • Vicente Gomez



Produced by

Directed by

DARRYL F. ZANUCK • ROUBEN MAMOULIAN

Associate Producer Robert T. Kane • Screen Play by Jo Swerling

THE HONOR BOX WINNER OF THE WEEK

Robert T. Kane

Associate Producer

BLOOD AND SAND

Abbott and Costello Repeat with 'In the Navy'

UNIVERSAL

The Digest Estimates

115%

Associate Producer Alex Gottlieb
Director Arthur Lubin
Screenplay Arthur T. Horman,
 John Grant
Original Arthur T. Horman
Stars Bud Abbott, Lou Costello,
 Dick Powell
Featured: Claire Dodd, The Andrews Sisters,
 Dick Foran, Butch and Buddy, Shemp
 Howard, Condos Brothers.
Photographer Joseph Valentine
Art Director Jack Otterson
Time 85 minutes

This picture is apt to wind up on mar-
quees as a picture with two titles. One will
read "Abbott and Costello" and the other
will say "In the Navy." But using either
one or both of them, the result will prob-
ably be the same, a cashing in on the success
of "Buck Privates."

And the customers who come because of jolly memories of "Buck Privates" probably won't be disappointed. True, Universal has given the picture production values something less than Grade A, true it is that the scripting bears evidence of being something of a rush job. But Abbott and Costello are there, and that means the laugh spots are many. And Dick Powell is there for the melody offering, along with the Andrews Sisters.

So, at this time the patrons will take what they get—and ask for more. But it will soon be time for Universal to give just a little more to do justice to the gold mine they have in Abbott and Costello. Remember when Paramount seemed to be riding

Current Reviews

	We Est.
In The Navy	UNIV 115
Man Hunt	FOX 100
Out of the Fog	WAR 80
Singapore Woman	WAR 75
West Point Widow	PAR 70
Angels With Broken Wings	REP 70
Paper Bullets	PDC 65
Knockout	WAR 65

the highways with Wally Beery and Raymond Hatton in a military series? And what happened when Para started coasting?

It's a bit unnecessary to tell you the story of a picture such as this, geared for laughs and let the plot fall where it may. Suffice to say Dick Powell motivates the story thread as a popular crooner who joins the Navy to escape the attentions of his fluttery women fans. Complications arrive when a snoopy feminine photographer discovers his secret; the laughs arrive, as you would expect, when you discover Abbott and Costello are in the Navy. Who cares what happens to story after that?

Associate producer Alex Gottlieb has tried to cram his picture with entertainment specialties, and succeeded to such extent that the cutting room floor probably has half as much good stuff as the edited picture. Arthur Lubin's direction is capable, though hampered by the fact that much of the picture must work against inferior stand-

ard miniatures and projection shots. Joe Valentine had the same handicap on his photography, but this ace-veteran, along with Jack Otterson on art direction, turn in top jobs on the things they had to work with.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: Hotter than a firecracker right now. Previewed May 27th.

What the Other Fellows Said:

REPORTER: "Universal sends "In the Navy" sailing on Decoration Day. It's a four-gun salute that starts where "Buck Privates" left off"

VARIETY: "Here is a box office running mate for that other Universal service comedy, 'Buck Privates.' Geared to ease the strain of these momentous times, 'In the Navy' presents another arm of our national defense in a style that will be hard to beat."

'Knockout' Ordinary, But Helps the Young Stars

WARNERS

The Digest Estimates

65%

Associate Producer Edmund Grainger
Director William Clemens
Screenplay M. Coates Webster
Original Michael Fessier

Featured: Arthur Kennedy, Olympe Bradna, Virginia Field, Anthony Quinn, Cliff Edwards, Cornel Wilde, Richard Ainsley, William Edmunds, Frank Wilcox, John Ridgely, Ben Welden, Charles Wilson, Edwin Stanley.

Photographer Ted McCord
Time 72 minutes

It is pretty difficult to say how many times this prizefight yarn has been told in one version or another, but we suppose a pugilistic picture is something that every

picture company has to get out of its system once a year or so. And so long as it is done adequately, and only aimed at programmer status, who should complain?

"Knockout's" chief importance is in the lead. Arthur Kennedy, who is being groomed for bigger things at Warners. The picture will help him along the path, for he turns in a personable and capable characterization.

Kennedy plays the role of a prize fighter who desires wisely to quit the ring at the peak of his career in favor of a more happy marriage with Olympe Bradna. But he reckons without the cupidity of his manager, Anthony Quinn, who has no intention of losing his meal ticket. Maybe you've heard that one before? Well, if that's the case we won't go on to tell you of the pug who can't earn a dollar until he returns to the ring, of the nasty social butterfly who

breaks up his home, oh, of all the things
that happen on to the happy ending.

Edmund Grainger's production is efficient, with a cast that satisfies, direction equal to the material by William Clemons.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: Once a year you play a prizefight picture. This will do. Previewed May 28th.

What the Other Fellows Said:

REPORTER: "Only the familiarity of its prize-ring background keeps "Knockout" from being topflight program entertainment."

VARIETY: "'Knockout' won't cause much of a stir at the box-office but capably serves the dual purpose of being a neat little program offering and a good showcase for the developing talents of Arthur Kennedy, its male lead."

Lang and Cast Make 'Man Hunt' Socko Drama

20TH CENTURY-FOX

The Digest Estimates

100%

Associate Producer Kenneth Macgowan
 Director Fritz Lang
 Screenplay Dudley Nichols
 Original Novel Geoffrey Household
 Stars Walter Pidgeon, Joan Bennett

Featured: George Sanders, John Carradine, Roddy McDowall, Ludwig Stossel, Heather Thatcher, Frederick Worlock, Roger Imhof, Egon Brecher, Lester Matthews, Holmes Herbert, Eily Malyon, Arno Frey, Fredrik Vogeding, Lucien Prival, Herbert Evans, Keith Hitchcock.

Photographer Arthur Miller
 Time 95 minutes

That word "genius," so muchly overworked since motion pictures came into being, must be given a coating of real sincerity when applied to Fritz Lang.

And if you desire to know why—see "Man Hunt" with an audience. There are few pictures you will recall even if your memory is long that take such a grip on the emotions, that hold an audience so tightly wound in suspense as this one from Twentieth Century-Fox.

This effect of suspense is uncanny. Much of it is achieved through the use of long sequences in which not a word is spoken. For instance, the very opening of the picture. The camera travels to tell us the story. Through shrubbery and trees it follows Walter Pidgeon, armed for the hunt, stalking his prey. When he gets his telescopic

lens on that prey—it is Adolph Hitler! One second to pull the trigger—and the world will heave a sigh of deepest relief. But the Germans have been stalking him too—and he is captured before being able to rid the world of its curse.

All this has been told without a word, up to the point where Pidgeon is captured. And even then, the picture realistically sticks to German for quite a spell, until the story begins to unfold, just when you want it to.

The picture must buck the fact that the fate of anti-Hitler offerings has been far from healthy at the box office. But, as with "Foreign Correspondent," there are the exceptions which point up the fact that it is the picture that really counts. And this is a picture.

When you finish marvelling at the direction by Lang, you must go on to record a great set of performances. Walter Pidgeon, who has been doing near "walk-on" roles at MGM, sinks his teeth into a real characterization—and what a superb job he does. Joan Bennett, to whom we have been uncharitable in the past, but to whom we apologized for her sweet comedy performance in "She Knew All the Answers," goes a step further this time with a happy impersonation of a tough cockney. Her skill is that she seems real in the role, not a Joan Bennett who has adopted a cockney accent for celluloid purposes.

To mention supporting roles is merely to list a great group of fine performers. Of especial interest is a youngster, Roddy

McDowall, imported, we believe, by Zanuck for his coming big one, "How Green Was My Valley." The kid is good. But so also are such safe standbys as George Sanders, John Carradine, Ludwig Stossel, Heather Thatcher, etc.

The story is told in the title. A famous big game hunter misses by a second the kill of his biggest prey—Hitler. From there on, through his escape from Germany, his hounding by the Gestapo in England, he becomes the hunted. But the finish finds him floating earthward in a parachute again stalking his maniac. It is very easy to tell you the story that way, but an hour of conversation would be needed to tell it to you as it unfolds on the screen.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: A really unusual picture, that showmanship can make override the Hitler angle, and, in fact, capitalize on it. Previewed June 9th.

What the Other Fellows Said:

REPORTER: "Geoffrey Household's 'Rogue Male' was the most tensely exciting adventure novel of its year. The screen adaptation of the novel, now titled 'Man Hunt,' is just as exciting. The picture builds to no climaxes, for the action is all one long engrossing climax—the most amazing job of sustained excitement in recent memory."

VARIETY: "Sheer melodrama, from title to tag, 'Man Hunt' makes its bid primarily for male audiences with a grim narrative competing with gun-stressing world news."

'Angels with Broken Wings' Good Family Fare

REPUBLIC

The Digest Estimates

70%

Associate Producer Albert J. Cohen
 Director Bernard Vorhaus
 Screenplay George Carleton Brown, Bradford Ropes
 Original George Carleton Brown

Featured: Binnie Barnes, Gilbert Roland, Mary Lee, Billy Gilbert, Jane Frazee, Edward Norris, Katherine Alexander, Leo Gorcey, Lois Ranson, Leni Lynn, Marilyn Blackmer, Tom Kennedy.

Photographer Ernest Miller
 Time 72 minutes

Republic's consistently ambitious efforts at fine casting, combined with intelligent direction from Bernhard Vorhaus, result in a family entertainment that will satisfy. It could have been better, since Republic put out the money to make it right, if the script had been a more smooth one.

But it tells an interesting story, and that is probably where the scripters got caught,

there were too many interesting angles. However, it holds interest, and the players—each and everyone, as the circus barkers say—are a treat to the spectator and must be a delight to the fellow who handled the casting.

Just read the names. Binnie Barnes, who is back in stride and clicking consistently these days, heads the list, with Gilbert Roland turning in a polished performance, the suave Sidney Blackmer, sure-fire Billy Gilbert, and a supporting cast including numerous youngsters who are all on their toes.

Binnie Barnes, who is this week also receiving critical raves for her job in Universal's "Tight Shoes," romps through a whacky part that sparks the picture. As the folks back home used to say, "She is a treat."

And it's the folks back home who will get the kick out of "Angels With Broken Wings." Because its plot motivation is that of three cute daughters trying to guide their widowed mother's happiness to the right marriage altar. It would be a cinch

except for the fact that the man they want for foster-daddy, Gilbert Roland, is entangled in an intricate divorce situation with Binnie, and you are never quite sure whether he is free or not.

Binnie keeps him dangling—for he is wealthy—but the kids get in all sorts of schemes.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: Has an excellent family appeal value for young and old. Previewed May 28th.

What the Other Fellows Said:

REPORTER: "'Angels With Broken Wings' is good entertainment for the family trade of the theatres with Republic contracts. A spotty screenplay spoils its chances of achieving real distinction, being as genuinely funny in some spots as it is pitifully unfunny in others."

VARIETY: "Republic's 'Angels With Broken Wings' is not up to that studio's usual standard and will take a lot of powerful selling to put over in the market for which it is intended."

' ' S U N N Y ' '

"... By far the best of the Anna Neagle filmusicals that Herbert Wilcox has brought us, "Sunny" is headed for a bright boxoffice future. It is a lithe-some, gay entertainment, attractively packaged..."

THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER

"... Musical-minded ticket buyers will find this version of "Sunny" to their liking. Tunefully strung together with the melodies of the old stage piece, picture is showmanly handled in all departments..."

DAILY VARIETY

"... A profit entry on any exhibitor's ledger and a revived appetite for motion pictures on the part of any customer. They loved it..."

MOTION PICTURE HERALD

"... Delightful fairy tale musical adds many laurels to the curls of Miss Neagle..."

SAN FRANCISCO NEWS

"... Bright and tuneful as the day it took Broadway by storm, the 'Sunny' of the title springs from the Herbert Wilcox work-shop, a tip-top piece of entertainment made to order for big towns and little, young, adults and children..."

MOTION PICTURE HERALD

"... 'Sunny' will please patrons of any age. The music will cause them to whistle and hum many new patrons into your theatre..."

THE FILM DAILY

'... Producer-Director Herbert Wilcox has given his picture lively tempo, lavish production and expert staging effects..."

HOLLYWOOD MOTION PICTURE REVIEW

"... Herbert Wilcox has given the best direction any picture of the sort has had..."

HOLLYWOOD SPECTATOR

"... Producer-Director Wilcox rates a vote of thanks and a round of applause..."

MOTION PICTURE HERALD

"... Producer-Director Herbert Wilcox's particular artistry in handling musical extravaganzas is well demonstrated. There's a flow to his films — an effortless something — which fits the musical 'spectacles' neatly into the book plot..."

THE FILM DAILY

"... Miss Neagle's dancing gives some unforgettable moments of exquisite flowing grace..."

SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER

"SUNNY" Opened Golden Gate Theatre, San Francisco,

A H O N E Y !

"...Everyone should see it. It is a striking demonstration of the screen's superiority over the stage as a medium for the presentation of a love story with a light opera complex..."
HOLLYWOOD SPECTATOR

"... 'Sunny' is easily the best of the trio of pictures Herbert Wilcox has made since transferring his British production activities to Hollywood. It is all-around audience entertainment."
BOX OFFICE DIGEST

"... The production by Wilcox is handsome, and his polished direction allows free rein to the players to score individually..."
THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER

"...Blessed with fine music, singing and dancing, this romantic love story with backstage and the New Orleans Mardi Gras atmosphere has plenty of genuine entertainment for the masses..."
HOLLYWOOD MOTION PICTURE REVIEW

"...Anna Neagle in her best straight performance to date by a wide margin..."
MOTION PICTURE HERALD

"... 'Sunny' a Wilcox-Neagle combo hit. Lavish production, colorful cast do well by Kern musical..."
THE FILM DAILY

"...Of all the musical pictures we have had since sound came to Hollywood, I think this is the best..."
HOLLYWOOD SPECTATOR

"...Miss Neagle handles her four songs easily with melodic charm, 'Who,' which dominates the production: 'Do You Love Me?', 'Sunshine' and 'Believe Me If All Those Endearing Young Charms.' Her dances and dramatic portions are equally impressive..."
DAILY VARIETY

"...Miss Neagle dances as she has never danced before, doing difficult routines with Bolger, several solos and an amusing sailor parody. She sings with Carroll and delivers a charming rendition of 'Believe Me If All Those Endearing Young Charms.' Throughout, her beauty and graciousness lend verve to the scene..."
THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER

"...Anna Neagle is seen at her best, turning in a portrayal of exceptional merit and charm..."
HOLLYWOOD MOTION PICTURE REVIEW

"...Sunny is a honey! Gay, tuneful and happily romantic. Anna Neagle's dancing is marvelous..."
OREGON JOURNAL

o Capacity Audiences + + + HELD OVER SECOND WEEK

'Singapore Woman' Outspoken Tropic Melodrama

WARNERS

The Digest Estimates

75%

Associate Producer Harlan Thompson
 Director Jean Negulesco
 Screenplay M. Coates Webster, Allen Rivkin
 Original Laird Doyle
 Stars Brenda Marshall, David Bruce

Featured: Virginia Field, Jerome Cowan, Rose Hobart, Heather Angel, Richard Ainley, Dorothy Tree, Bruce Lester, Connie Leon, Douglas Walton, Gilbert Emery, Stanley Logan, Abner Biberman, Eva Puig.

Photographer Ted McCord
 Time 65 minutes

"Singapore Woman," in its B bracket, will make money for the exhibitors who can always make money with a title like

that, and will probably satisfy the customers who always respond to a title like that.

The picture is perfectly outspoken in doing what it promises in the title. And this was Producer Harlan Thompson's wisest choice. It is mellow meller, out to take full advantage of all the color and atmosphere of the fictional Far East and it pulls no punches in its effort to include everything you will expect.

There is the gal who has gone wrong, and is sinking lower and lower in the social scale, there is the upright young hero who tries to save her.

Chief interest of the picture is in the performances of two of the younger Warner list, Brenda Marshall and David Bruce. Miss Marshall gets the better opportunity in a somewhat maudlin role and comes through advantageously. David Bruce is a

youngster on the Doug Fairbanks, Jr., type, who will probably come along in future pictures.

Jean Negulesco's direction is adequate to the subject.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: Safe meller bet in its price group. Previewed June 1st.

What the Other Fellows said:

REPORTER: "Melodramatic to the point of narrowly escaping absurdity, "Singapore Woman" is a picture with little to recommend it."

VARIETY: "Harlan Thompson has turned out a better than the run-of-the-mill B picture in "Singapore Woman," and at the same time affords Brenda Marshall and David Bruce, comparative newcomers to the screen, full opportunity to demonstrate what they can do in the way of acting."

'Paper Bullets' Is Surprise Low Budget Winner

PDC

The Digest Estimates

65%

Producer Maurice Kozinsky
 Associate Producer Franklin Kozinsky
 Director Phil Rosen
 Original Screenplay Martin Mooney

Featured: Joan Woodbury, Jack LaRue, Linda Ware, John Archer, Vince Barnett, Alan Ladd, Gavin Godon, Philip Trent, William Halligan, George Pembroke, Selmer Jackson, Kenneth Harlan, Alden Chase, Robert Strange, Alex Callam, Harry Depp.

Photographer Arthur Martinelli
 Time 69 minutes

Some day some wise production executive on a major lot is going to wake up to what a bargain he can buy by capitalizing on the industry's neglect of that veteran director, Phil Rosen.

In almost all the trade and lay reviews of "Paper Bullets" you will find the critics marvelling at the great results that have been achieved on a small budget. One paper even headlined, "Proves \$20,000 Can Make a Lot of Picture."

That is always an unfortunate approach to a worthy picture. It hurts the successful producer, because it sets a terrifically cheap price up in the minds of salesmen and exhibitors. It does even more damage to a director, because after a few of these really praising headlines, he suddenly finds himself so good that the majors associate him with nothing but the cheaters.

So he pays for being good.

The fact that a good man is a good man, whether working with \$20,000 or \$2,000,000, is being retold by "Paper Bullets."

It's a corking picture, and a definite bargain buy of entertainment for any exhibitor. Producers Maurice and Franklin Kozinsky have put the right elements together in the right formation. Original screenplay

by Martin Mooney has meat and substance, Phil Rosen guides it with workmanlike skill, the cast, while not of marquee stature, delivers pleasingly. And there are even a couple of song numbers from Linda Ware that are easy to take.

The story basis is an expose of big city racketeering, told through tracing the life story of a girl and two boys from the time they were orphans. Comes youth, and the girl gets trapped by foolish loyalty to a playboy, lands in the jailhouse, and then, learning she was practically framed starts out for revenge on her release.

The melodramatic elements are there, the values are in the tight knit manner in which they have been presented. Joan Woodbury and Jack LaRue get the top spots, and deliver effectively. These two, also, are

among the citizens neglected by major casting offices.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: A little package, but it is all entertainment honey. Previewed June 3rd.

What the Other Fellows Said:

REPORTER: "Something of a revelation in budget-picture making, "Paper Bullets" is a show that puts to shame many of its more costly brothers in the action market."

VARIETY: "This is in many respects a remarkable picture. Remarkable in that it presents a maximum entertainment on a minimum of shrewd expenditure. For general audiences it would seem to lack nothing that a story of this nature should have to create intense interest and to give satisfaction in its narration and its outcome."

MONDAY NIGHT IS "SESSIONS" NIGHT

"IT" CAFE

— NEVER A COVER OR MINIMUM CHARGE —

DINING - DANCING - ENTERTAINMENT

Hollywood Plaza Hotel

1637 No. Vine St.

Greetings

AND BEST WISHES

M.P.T.O.A.

CONVENTIONEERS

★
WATCH FOR THESE

BIG ONES

FOR 1941-1942
★

20th
CENTURY
FOX

"SUN VALLEY SERENADE"
starring Sonja HENIE • John PAYNE with Glen MILLER & His Orchestra
Directed by H. Bruce Humberstone • Produced by Milton Sperling

★
"BELLE STARR"
with Gene TIERNEY • Dana ANDREWS
Directed by Irving Cummings
Produced by Kenneth Macgowan

★
"CHARLEY'S AUNT"
starring Jack BENNY • Kay FRANCIS
Directed by Archie Mayo
Produced by William Perlberg

★
"HOW GREEN WAS MY VALLEY"
starring Walter PIDGEON • Maureen O'HARA
Directed by John Ford • Produced by Darryl F. Zanuck

★
"A YANK IN THE R.A.F."
starring Tyrone POWER • Betty GRABLE • John SUTTON
Directed by Henry King • Produced by Darryl F. Zanuck
Associate Producer Lou Edelman

★
"WILD GEESE CALLING"
starring Henry FONDA • Joan BENNETT • Warren WILLIAM
Directed by John Brahm • Produced by Harry Joe Brown

★
"WEEK END IN HAVANA"
starring Alice FAYE • John PAYNE • Carmen MIRANDA • Cesar ROMERO
Directed by Walter Lang • Produced by William Le Baron

★
"BENJAMIN BLAKE"

★
"REMEMBER THE DAY"

★
"BLIND MAN'S HOUSE"

★
"THE BLACK SWAN"

★
"BOWERY NIGHTINGALE"

★
"MY GAL SAL"

★
"FLIGHT SURGEON"

★
"SONG OF THE ISLANDS"

★
"RISE AND SHINE"

★
"DELAYED ACTION"

★
"MOON TIDE"

★
"THE LIGHT OF HEART"

★
"I WAKE UP SCREAMING"

★
"CONFIRM OR DENY"

★
"LAW AND ORDER, INC."

★
"CONEY ISLAND"

★
"DOWN TO THE SEA IN SHIPS"

★
"THE NIGHT THE WORLD SHOOK"

★
"HELLO, FRISCO, HELLO"

★
"SWAMP WATER"



THE BATTING AVERAGES

1941

Producers and Associate Producers

	Pictures	%
Joseph Mankiewicz	1	181
David Hempstead	1	143
Paul Jones	2	139
Harry Joe Brown	1	132
Pan Berman	2	134
John Considine	1	131
Bruce Manning	1	126
William Perlberg	1	125
William Cagney	1	124
Robert Kane	1	121
Arthur Hornblow, Jr.	1	121
Frank Ross	1	110
Mark Hellinger	1	110
Fred Kohlmar	2	109
Alex Gottlieb	1	108
Victor Saville	1	106
Joseph Pasternak	2	104
Henry Blanke	3	103
Kenneth Macgowan	2	100

Producer-Directors

	Pictures	%
Frank Capra	1	137
Alexander Korda	1	128
George Stevens	1	127
E. H. Griffith	1	120
Clarence Brown	1	107

Actresses

	Pictures	%
Ginger Rogers	1	143
Barbara Stanwyck	2	129
Vivien Leigh	1	128
Irene Dunne	1	127
Rosalind Russell	1	125
Olivia de Havilland	1	124
Madeleine Carroll	1	120
Bette Davis	1	118
Deanna Durbin	1	118
Myrna Loy	1	118
Alice Faye	2	117
Carole Lombard	1	118
Ida Lupino	1	110
Jean Arthur	1	110
Hedy Lamarr	1	107
Joan Crawford	1	106
Margaret Sullivan	2	106

Directors

	Pictures	%
Victor Schertzinger	1	157
Robert Leonard	1	150
George Cukor	2	144
George B. Seitz	1	133
Fritz Lang	1	132
Norman Taurog	1	131
John Ford	1	130
Rouben Mamoulian	1	130
Irving Cummings	1	127
Sam Wood	1	127
Robert Stevenson	1	126
Al Hall	1	125
Mitchell Leisen	1	121
Preston Sturges	1	120
Edmund Goulding	1	118
William Seiter	1	118
Jack Conway	1	118
Alfred Hitchcock	1	118
Raoul Walsh	2	117
Frank Borzage	1	115
Michal Curtiz	1	112
Archie Mayo	1	106
Irving Pichel	1	103
George Marshall	1	100

Actors

	Pictures	%
Bing Crosby	1	157
Bob Hope	1	157
Cary Grant	2	154
Gary Cooper	1	137
James Stewart	4	132
Mickey Rooney	2	132
Randolph Scott	1	132
Spencer Tracy	1	131
Tyrone Power	1	130
Laurence Olivier	1	128
Don Ameche	1	127
Charles Boyer	1	126
James Cagney	1	124
Fred MacMurray	1	120
Henry Fonda	1	120
William Powell	1	118
Robert Taylor	1	115
Edward G. Robinson	1	112
Abbott and Costello	1	108
Melvyn Douglas	3	105
Paul Muni	1	103
Robert Young	2	102

What Happened **THIS WEEK ?**

The Week's Top Suspense:

Every foot, yes, every inch of "Man Hunt" under the deft guidance of Fritz Lang. . . . This is the most thrill-packed picture to come to the screen since that last Alfred Hitchcock spine-tickler, "Foreign Correspondent." . . . The audiences that like to go home with jangling nerves—and feeling well-rewarded for their four bits investment—will eat this up and start the word-of-mouth ball rolling hell bent for hellangone.

The Week's Off-Hand Thought:

Just for fun go by the large board displayed on Vine Street near Hollywood, where they display the photos of all the glamour boys and girls of the radio. . . . Then stop and ponder what will happen when television rules the airwaves. . . . Some of these local dispensers of various commodities may have the pleasing voices, but they couldn't get their foot over your threshold on pictorial personality if they were selling you gold nuggets for old clothes.

The Week's Best Routine:

Abbott and Costello sock home with machine-gun precision many of their favorite routines in "In the Navy," in particular the "under the shell" game. . . . But the topper, is the routine showing Lou Costello trying—and we mean trying—to get into his hammock on a cruiser. . . . He should have got a bonus of a stunt man's salary added to his acting stipend—that's how he goes to town.

The Week's Puzzle:

Or, rather, it is two puzzles. . . . One is whether Joe Breen is going to stay on as the industry's chaperon, or step on to duties at RKO. . . . It is our hunch that Joe has been fed up in recent months with the attitude of many producers—and incidentally giving thought to financial advancement for self and family. . . . Second puzzle is the rumor that the job may go to Congressman Costello. . . . The Congressman is a good chap, but just what background is there comparable with that of Joe Breen for the ticklish motion picture job?

All Major Features Released in 1941

A

OVER \$500,000

Philadelphia Story	MGM	181
Road to Zanzibar	PAR	157
Ziegfeld Girl	MGM	150
Kitty Foyle	RKO	143
Meet John Doe	WAR	137
Western Union	FOX	132
Men of Boys Town	MGM	131
Tobacco Road	FOX	130
Blood and Sand	FOX	128
That Hamilton Woman	UA	128
Penny Serenade	COL	127
That Night in Rio	FOX	127
Back Street	UNIV	126
Strawberry Blonde	WAR	124
I Wanted Wings	WAR	121
Lady Eve	PAR	120
Virginia	PAR	120
The Great Lie	WAR	118
Nice Girl?	UNIV	118
Mr. and Mrs. Smith	RKO	118
Love Crazy	MGM	118
Flight Command	MGM	115
The Sea Wolf	WAR	112
The Devil and Miss Jones	RKO	110
Come Live With Me	MGM	107
Great American Broadcast	FOX	106
Woman's Face	MGM	106
Pot O' Gold	UA	96
Hudson's Bay	FOX	94
Son of Monte Cristo	UA	87
Lady From Cheyenne	UNIV	86
So Ends Our Night	UA	85
That Uncertain Feeling	UA	83
Flame of New Orleans	UNIV	80
Victory	PAR	78

B

FROM \$200,000 TO \$500,000

Andy Hardy's Private Secretary	MGM	133
This Thing Called Love	COL	125
High Sierra	WAR	110

Cheers for Miss Bishop	UA	90
Footsteps In The Dark	WAR	86
Bad Man	MGM	86
Wagon Wheels at Night	WAR	85
Topper Returns	UA	84
Maisie Was a Lady	MM	83
Adam Had Four Sons	COL	82
Mad Doctor	PAR	81
A Girl, A Guy, and a Gob	RKO	80
Affectionately Yours	WAR	80
Tall, Dark and Handsome	FOX	78
Texas Rangers Ride Again	PAR	78
Invisible Woman	UNIV	78
They Dare Not Love	COL	77
Three on a Honeymoon	WAR	77
Round Up	PAR	77
People vs. Dr. Kildare	MGM	76
Model Wife	UNIV	76
Las Vegas Nights	PAR	76
Sis Hopkins	REP	76
Reaching for the Sun	PAR	73
You're the One	PAR	73
Romance of the Rio Grande	FOX	73
Blonde Inspiration	MGM	73
Washington Melodrama	MGM	72
Life with Henry	PAR	72
Golden Hoofs	FOX	72
Road Show	UA	71
Keeping Company	MGM	71
Flight From Destiny	WAR	70
Man Who Lost Himself	UNIV	70
Black Cat	UNIV	70
Rage in Heaven	MGM	70
The Penalty	MGM	69
Wild Man of Borneo	MGM	69
They Met in Argentina	RKO	68
Murder Among Friends	RKO	67
Hard Boiled Canary	FOX	66

C

FROM \$100,000 TO \$200,000

Buck Privates	UNIV	108
---------------	------	-----

Six Lessons from Madame LaZonga	UNIV	80
Ellery Queen Penthouse Mystery	COL	78
Blondie Goes Latin	COL	76
Ellery Queen, Master Detective	COL	73
Her First Beau	COL	72
Scotland Yard	FOX	72
Phantom Submarine	COL	72
Play Girl	RKO	72
Trial of Mary Dugan	MGM	72
A Dangerous Game	UNIV	72
Man Made Monster	UNIV	72
Ride on Vaquero	FOX	71
Double Date	UNIV	71
Face Behind the Mask	COL	71
Ride, Kelly, Ride	FOX	71
Boston Blackie	COL	71
Horror Island	UNIV	70
Nutty in the Arctic	UNIV	70
Dead Men Tell	UNIV	70
Free and Easy	MGM	70
Devil Commands	COL	70
Sleepers West	FOX	70
Great Mr. Nobody	WAR	70
The Monster and the Girl	PAR	70
Lucky Devils	UNIV	70
Where Did You Get That Girl	UNIV	70
Convoy	RKO	70
She Couldn't Say No	WAR	70
Michael Shayne, Private Detective	FOX	70
The Case of the Black Parrot	WAR	70
Lone Wolf Takes A Chance	COL	70
A Man Betrayed	REP	68
Let's Make Music	RKO	68
Meet the Chump	UNIV	68
Knockout	WAR	68
Mr. Dynamite	UNIV	67
Saint in Palm Springs	WAR	67
Strange Alibi	WAR	67
Repent at Leisure	RKO	66
Melody for Three	RKO	66
Rookies on Parade	REP	64
Shadow on the Stairs	WAR	64
Scattergood Baines	RKO	64
Girl in The News	FOX	62

D

BELOW \$100,000

Power Dive	PAR	78
Under Age	COL	71
The Great Swindle	COL	70
Barnyard Follies	REP	68
Bowery Boy	REP	68
Petticoat Politics	REP	68
Roar of the Press	MONO	67
Phantom of Chinatown	MONO	67
Arkansas Judge	REP	66
Sign of The Wolf	MONO	66
Mr. District Attorney	REP	66
Chamber of Horrors	MONO	66
Great Train Robbery	REP	64
Thieves Fall Out	WAR	64
Footlight Fever	RKO	64
Land of Liberty	MGM	63
Missing Ten Days	COL	63
Pride of the Bowery	MONO	63
Invisible Ghost	MONO	62
Shot in the Dark	WAR	62
Flying Wild	MONO	62
Her First Romance	MONO	62
You're Out of Luck	MONO	62
The Big Boss	COL	61
The Old Swimming Hole	MONO	60

EDITORIAL

(Continued From Page 3)

critics allowed to pass with one of those irritating phrases: "This one will get by if your patrons are not too critical?"

Well, the guy who has shot two dollars or more for his big evening at the movies is JUST APT to be too critical. So critical that he doesn't come back next week when the theatre has a real attraction.

Our recommendation: A consideration of this admission price problem. With a possibility of evolving a method that would get deserved coin for the big attraction on which the industry exists, while at the same time giving a legitimate—not swollen—return on the ones that rate as average, and none on the clucks. Kill the clucks off.

And if you want to know the real purpose of this whole message, that is it: Make it impossible for them to get admission prices even faintly approaching real entertainment. KILL THE CLUCKS!

Blood and Sand Tops

(Continued From Page 5)

Hitler theme and this one may get by satisfactorily.

Martha Scott, who has scored so heavily in the past year, is co-starred with George Brent.

Paul Lukas, Egon Brecher and Kay Linaker head the featured players. James Whale directed for Producer Sam Bischoff.

Columbia's second release is the new Larry Darmour production "THE GREAT SWINDLE" riding at 73%. Incidentally, this is the last of the Jack Holt feature series, but he will soon be back in a super-serial. Marjorie Reynolds, Sidney Blackmer and Jonathan Hale are seen in support. Lew Collins directed for Producer Darmour.

Columbia's third and last release "THE BIG BOSS," 61%, is another programmer from the Irving Briskin unit. Otto Kruger, Gloria Dixon and John Litel are featured. Charles Barton directed.
MONOGRAM—Also 1 Release

Monogram's release this week is another of the typical Bela Lugosi horror-chillers "THE INVISIBLE GHOST," 62%. Supporting Mr. Lugosi are John McGuire, Polly Ann Young, Clarence Muse and Terry Walker.

Joseph H. Lewis directed for Producer Sam Katzman.

This Year's Pictures Will Be BOUGHT

—The Government Made It That Way

THIS YEAR IS THE BOX OFFICE DIGEST

YEAR—BECAUSE IT SPEAKS THE
ONLY IMPORTANT VOICE:

The Voice of the BOX OFFICE

1941  1942

monogram MARCHES ON FEATURES 56 WESTERNS

"NAVY BOUND"

Talbert Josselyn's story published in Collier's Magazine



"UNDER NORTHERN LIGHTS"

Featuring the immortal melodies... "At Dawning" and "From the Land of the Sky Blue Water"...

by Charles Wakefield Cadman



4 "EAST SIDE KIDS" COMEDY-DRAMAS

with Leo Gorcey, Huntz Hall, Bobby Jordan... in a series of box office champions... each featuring an adult star.

In Preparation:

"GHOSTS of the NIGHT" starring BELA LUGOSI



12 MONOGRAM MONEY MAKERS 14 SHOWMENS SUCCESS PICTURES



8 ROUGH RIDERS
with BUCK JONES
and TIM MCCOY



8 RANGE BUSTERS
CRASH CORRIGAN
DUSTY KING
MAX TERHUNE



8 JOHN WAYNE REISSUED ACTION WESTERNS

REPUBLIC WELCOMES MPTOA AND PCCITO



THERE'S TROUBLE
IN PARADISE!

*You'll be
surprised*

delighted,
and amused . . .
when this bunch
of gay, young
angels sets out to
raise the devil.



ANGELS WITH BROKEN WINGS

**BINNIE BARNES
GILBERT ROLAND
MARY LEE**

BILLY GILBERT • JANE FRAZEE
EDWARD NORRIS • KATHARINE
ALEXANDER • LEO GORCEY
LOIS RANSON • LENI LYNN
MARILYN HARE

Bernard Vorhaus — Director

Screen play by George Carleton Brown & Bradford Ropes

Original story by George Carleton Brown

**A
REPUBLIC PICTURE**



Box Office

DIGEST

VOLUME 12, NO. 25

HOLLYWOOD, CALIF., JUNE 19, 1941

CURRENT PREVIEWS

MOON OVER MIAMI

SHEPHERD OF THE
HILLS

UNDERGROUND

THE RELUCTANT
DRAGON

THE BIG STORE

THE PARSON OF
PANAMINT

TIGHT SHOES

SAN ANTONIO ROSE

*The Box Office
Reports:*

'In the Navy' Rolling on High Seas

See Page 5

25c

The Box Office

DIGEST "HONOR BOX"

The Biggest Grossing Release Of The Past Week

This Week **UNIVERSAL** wins with
"IN THE NAVY" 136%



Assoc. Prod.
ALEX GOTTLIEB



BUD ABBOTT and LOU COSTELLO

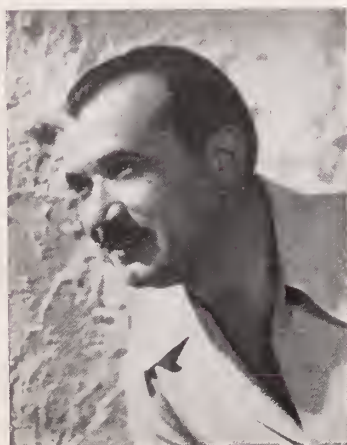


Director
ARTHUR LUBIN

Screenplay
ARTHUR T. HORMAN
JOHN GRANT

Original
ARTHUR T. HORMAN

Featured
CLAIRE DODD
THE ANDREW SISTERS
DICK FORAN
BUTCH & BUDDY
SHEMP HOWARD
CONDOS BROTHERS



Photographer
JOSEPH VALENTINE



DICK POWELL



Art Director
Jack Otterson

The Box Office DIGEST

*The Industry's
Distinctive Weekly*

DRESS 'EM UP

An Editorial by ROBERT E. WELSH

Despite the fact that the recent exhibitor convention in Hollywood did not produce the anticipated attendance, nor the snappy attention to industry problems that had been expected, it did bring quite a number of successful showmen with whom Your Editor could join in an old-timers fanning bee.

Many were the problems discussed. Questions from puzzled theater men as to why Hollywood "doesn't do this, or does do that." Countered by many attempts at answering the problem as to why the exhibitor today—under high-pressure dating, dual bill problems—cannot put forth the showmanship selling on an attraction that made this industry.

But it was interesting to Your Editor to find a question that Hollywood may consider of minor importance, bouncing back every so often in the conversations.

It is that question of: "What makes one company's product look rich and expensive, and another company's, with possibly even as strong a story and cast to sell, look like second grade merchandise?"

"Is it merely money?" the exhibitors asked.

★ ★ ★

It isn't money alone, we know that, because we have been through the mill from the New York office to the studio.

It is merely a matter of intelligent executive judgment.

Back down the years when Your Editor was advertising the celluloid, and trying to sell it, he can remember when—with all other selling factors on a picture or a group being even—the exhibitor would say, "I'm going to buy Paramount. They always have rich sets and dressing, and my patrons like that class feeling."

A few years later Paramount began to slip, and MGM stepped ahead. It became a pretty common phrase for theater owners to say: "Well even if an MGM picture isn't so hot, you know you will get CLASS in production, and that means a lot with the customers."

The phrase still persists. And it has carried MGM through a few seasons that were really weak on the quality of the entertainment.

Today we have MGM and Fox alert to the values of this "class" touch in properties and settings, Paramount hitting a

fair average, and some others who only do it on a spasm scale. This is, every once in a while the production department goes on a binge.

★ ★ ★

When Your Editor changed from a New York memo writer to a Hollywood recipient of memos from the sales department he made a startling discovery.

It doesn't cost any great amount more to get this magic "class" touch than it does to turn out a piece of shoddy.

Because in this respect Los Angeles and Hollywood combine for miracles. There are organizations here, and facilities here, that would make Missus Astorbilt Von Vanderbilt green with envy.

We found these stylists on picture settings make their two or three times a year trips to New York—and it used to be London, too—to anticipate the moment when Hollywood would lead a style. Setting the home styles for the world.

And the important part is the cost. We found in our innocent wanderings that it cost more for a "Tobacco Road" sort of set dressing than it did for a Newport home. We found that art directors were continually being thrown for a loss by unit managers who saved \$2.75 on the daily furniture rentals for a set, and ruined a \$900 background.

And we started to wonder about the idiosyncracies of Hollywood. With all the facilities available, why should one or two companies be able to arm their salesmen with that magic word "class" and so many others be missing the boat for lack of an alarm clock?

★ ★ ★

The exhibitors at the convention started this argument in their off the cuff wonderings with Your Editor. They mentioned names—of companies

that are hitting high this past year in showmanship, and falling down on having their shoes shined and clothes pressed for appearance sake.

We won't mention any names.

But we will be just as happy as anybody else when things level up and we can drop that weary phrase, "It isn't so hot as a picture, but it has that class MGM touch."

DISTRIBUTORS' BATTING AVERAGE FOR 1941

		%
Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer	22 Releases	96
United Artists	8 Releases	90
Paramount	16 Releases	89
Twentieth Century-Fox	19 Releases	87
Warners-First National	22 Releases	83
Universal	20 Releases	83
RKO-Radio	16 Releases	81
Columbia	18 Releases	78
Republic	10 Releases	69
Monogram	10 Releases	64

The Highlighter: **Covers the Picture News Front in a Quick Glance**

Will you pardon Your Highlighter for picking on a social event as the Highlight of the Week for just this once? He would like to start you off with some great upheaval of bosses and stooges at some plant or other, but it is the social event that stays in memory. . . . We refer to the all-day round up that George Brown, in conjunction with Harry Carey, staged in connection with two events, the preview of "Shepherd of the Hills" and Harry Carey's thirty-third anniversary in motion pictures. . . . From the early morning start of the projection machine's whirling to show the picture, on through the day to Harry Carey's gracious hospitality at his picturesque Saugus ranch, the heart-warming opportunity to renew recollections with so many of the industry's veterans, and into an evening in which we saw many of them in pictures dating from the first Edison efforts, it was a grand job of good will selling. . . . George Brown's efficient staff was so perfectly organized that there was nary a hitch in a twelve hour session. . . . (And are those boys loyal to their chief!) . . . Summing it up: Paramount could have conveyed two car-loads of critics and columnists to the Ozarks for the preview, and at that great expense not gained a fraction of the good will accomplished by this family party.

JOE BREEN MAKES IT DEFINITELY RKO-RADIO

After being bounced around by the rumor mongers for a week or two—into Will Hays' job, back at his old job, here, there and a few other spots—Joe Breen finally got his way. . . . He reports this week to his new post as production chief at the company's Hollywood studios. . . . That's sad news for the Hays organization and good news for Radio. . . . We are looking forward to Breen's ability to gain loyalty, cooperation and confidence to have considerable boosting effect on RKO morale. . . . There have been times in recent years when it hasn't been so hot—due to lack of a forceful captain on the bridge. . . . With the Breen matter settled, the other important production shift of the week was the definite placing of Joe Pasternak, the Deanna Durbin Svengali, on the MGM production roster. . . . Pasternak rumors also had him in three or four different roles in recent weeks since it became known that he would leave "U" after completion of the current Durbin picture. . . . But then, producers seem to have been busy all along the line this past week. . . . John Stahl inks the papers for a producer-director deal at Twentieth Century-Fox. . . . What a whale of a list of big timers Zanuck is building up out there in Beverly Hills in

preparation for the competitive wars ahead in the coming hectic consent decree selling season. . . . Another item of the week was the rumor, as yet unconfirmed by official announcement, that Harry Joe Brown would depart his producer job at Twentieth. . . . Harry Joe has an impressive list of money-makers on his record since moving to Twentieth from Warners.

The Reason Why

Below is the reason why we are now listing our reviews each week on the front cover. . . . If you will pardon our blushes, we think it is fine evidence of the exhibitor reader value and loyalty to BOX OFFICE DIGEST. . . . And so, we thank Exhibitor L. Lukan.

LAKE THEATRE CORP.

L. O. Lukan, President

Operating

**THE GREEN LAKE THEATRE
7107 Woodlawn Avenue
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON**

Mr. Robert Welsh,
617 North La Brea Ave.,
Los Angeles, Calif.

Dear Sir:

It takes courage to offer a suggestion to an old "Sophist" like yourself, but even if it copies an idea from one of your weak "Contemporaries" why don't you publish a list of the pictures you review, on the front page of the Digest.

After all I'm one of those who read your sheet from cover to cover, and see a lot of good in it, but why, when I want to refer to a back issue, to see what Welsh said about a picture, do I have to consume so much time in searching for it. That spot now occupied by "The Only Authentic" etc., is an ideal place for it—put the slogan some place else.

It would help a lot and make your opinions even more valuable because we could find them easier and use them oftener.

Sincerely Yours,
L. O. LUKAN

HOLLYWOOD DOING ITS SHARE FOR THE KHAKI BOYS

Hollywood's talent contingent isn't getting much more than local publicity for its fine efforts in providing top entertainment at the reachable soldier camps, but when the record is written some day it will be a story to be proud of. . . . Overworked stars, hopping between picture and radio jobs, with time off for consultations with the Income Tax man, have nevertheless squeezed in jumps here, there and everywhere to put on big scale shows for the entertainment hungry boys. . . . Modestly in the background in connection with this buzzing beehive of service is Charles Feldman, artists representative, who serves under the title "talent chairman." . . . Feldman's name only gets into the publicity by accident, but he is the man who pulls the strings, does the persuading, cements the organization work, and in other words, delivers the shows. . . . It's a great cause, and a great guy working at it.

TRAVELING HERE AND THERE AROUND THE STUDIOS

The critics had quite a problem going through the picket lines at the Walt Disney studio to view "The Reluctant Dragon." . . . Most pertinent question asked of them by the pickets was, "Aren't you a member of the Newspaper Workers or Writers Guilds?" It made some of the boys a bit squeamish. Incidentally, if all picket lines presented as clean-cut, alert-looking, examples of young America as this Disney line does, you would never hear much talk of Commie influence on strikes. . . . Latest inside is that Trem Carr and Ray Johnston have set up their Monogram financial picture in very solid shape, and the new season is approached with renewed confidence. . . . That joint deal by which David Selznick and Frank Capra will produce for United Artists release continues in the "on again, off again," stage. . . . Earl Baldwin, who holds something of an industry record for service with one company—nine years with Warners—this week got his release from an MGM contract at his own request. . . . Baldwin had completed the script of "New York Heartbeat" before departing from the Culver City lot, which he had only joined in March.

METRO SEEMS TO HAVE ANOTHER "SEQUOIA" HEADACHE

Remember when MGM went through a couple of years making "Sequoia," and the darn animals persisted in growing up faster than the off-the-cuff scenarists could write the story? . . . "The Yearling" now seems to be in the same class, after some

(Continued on Page 12)

The Box Office: Universal's Release

"IN THE NAVY" Tops Week

Of 14 New Releases In The Past Week,
4 Ran Over 100%, 2 Came Through
Okay, And 8 Were Very Weak.

UNIVERSAL—1 Release

Universal Studios walk away with top honors of the week with the new Abbott and Costello comedy "IN THE NAVY" which is a direct follow-up on Abbott and Costello's sensation of two months ago, "Buck Privates." "Buck Privates" was sold on flat rental in the majority of cases, furthermore in many key cities it played in second run houses instead of deluxe first runs and still surprised Hollywood with its terrific gross, which according to box office figures ran 108%.

Now that Abbott and Costello are established as one of Hollywood's top box office draws their new feature "IN THE NAVY" has just been released and is averaging 136% and incidentally this one has 35 hold-overs out of 39 first run openings. Furthermore, "IN THE NAVY" is the sixth biggest grossing picture of 1941 which means plenty of hard cold cash in the bank for both Universal and the exhibitors lucky enough to have Universal contracts.

"IN THE NAVY" is the first three hundred thousand dollar production that has ever won an Honor Box since the Box Office Digest has been on the presses—approximately five years; the average Honor Box winner is generally a production that costs upwards of a half million dollars and sometimes two and three times that amount.

Co-starred with Abbott and Costello is Dick Powell. In the supporting cast are again the Andrews Sisters and others in the featured cast are Claire Dodd, Dick Foran, and Butch and Buddy.

Universal's production team, Producer Alex Gottlieb and Director Arthur Lubin which made "Buck Privates," is also responsible for "IN THE NAVY." And incidentally they will very shortly have another Abbott and Costello picture ready for release, which probably won't hurt exhibitors' feelings any.

MGM—2 Releases

MGM has two new releases this week,

6 FEATURES "GOING UP"

	Was Now
Blood and Sand	PAR 130 134
Love Crazy	MGM 118 127
I Wanted Wings	PAR 121 123
A Woman's Face	MGM 106 113
Reaching For the Sun	PAR 73 75
Free and Easy	MGM 70 72

14 New Releases Not In The Last Issue

	%	Est.
In the Navy	UNIV 136	125
Billy the Kid	MGM 125	142
One Night in Lisbon	PAR 111	115
Sunny	RKO 101	100
Million Dollar Baby	WAR 93	90
She Knew All the Answers	COL 84	85
Lady From Louisiana	REP 78	75
Cowboy and the Blonde	FOX 72	70
Baines Pulls the Strings	RKO 68	65
Singapore Woman	WAR 68	75
Great Commandment	FOX 66	?
I'll Wait For You	MGM 63	60
Saint's Vacation	RKO 63	60
Nurse's Secret	WAR 62	60

one a good money-getter and the second a very weak programmer.

The re-make of "BILLY THE KID" by MGM on an elaborate scale in Technicolor starring Bob Taylor, has been very well received and in spite of the fact that it might be considered primarily a man's picture, is doing exceptionally well, averaging 125% to date. Naturally in western territories this picture will be due for a considerable jump.

Supporting Bob Taylor in this big western epic is a strong featured cast headed by Brian Donlevy, Ian Hunter, Mary Howard, Gene Lockhart, Lon Chaney, Jr., and many others. The producer and director of "BILLY THE KID" may seem a bit new to the average American exhibitor. For the past eight or nine years Producer Irving Asher has been in charge of Warners' English production and this is his first Hollywood made picture. David Miller, the director, has been at MGM for some time but only as director of shorts and "BILLY THE KID" serves as his first feature job.

MGM's second release this week, "I'LL WAIT FOR YOU," 63%, is a weak programmer that will have to be spotted in as a filler. Virginia Weidler, Robert Sterling and Marsha Hunt are featured.

PARAMOUNT—1 Release

Paramount's new release this week, "ONE NIGHT IN LISBON," 111%, is another feature co-starring Paramount's popular team of Madeleine Carroll and Fred MacMurray. The title is probably a little misleading to some of the public, for in the strict sense this is not a war picture but more of a romantic comedy drama equally as entertaining as "Honeymoon in Bali."

The first figures are quite satisfactory and this one will probably build on word-of-mouth advertising.

Supporting Mr. MacMurray and Miss Carroll are Patricia Morrison, Billie Burke, John Loder, Edmund Gwenn and Reginald Denny.

E. H. Griffith was the producer-director and Virginia Van Upp wrote the screenplay.

RKO—3 Releases

RKO-Radio Pictures have three new releases, one a good money-getter and two very weak programmers.

RKO's best is the new Herbert Wilcox production "SUNNY," 101%, which in spite of poor box office conditions seems to be going over quite well and much better than the last Wilcox-Neagle musical "No, No, Nanette."

About a year ago when Mr. Wilcox signed his new RKO-Radio contract it called for three big musicals starring Anna Neagle. Accordingly Mr. Wilcox bought three big musicals; "Irene," "No, No, Nanette" and "Sunny." The first of these, "Irene" was a box office clean-up, the second, "No, No, Nanette" only did fair and now the third "Sunny" seems to be giving a very good account of itself at the box office.

Seen opposite Miss Neagle is John Carroll with Ray Bolger, Edward Everett Horton, Helen Westley and Frieda Inescourt featured.

In these days of so much war talk and depression, musicals seem to be appreciated more than ever and "Sunny" will probably be no exception.

RKO's second release is another of the Scattergood Baines series entitled "SCATTERGOOD BAINES PULLS THE STRINGS," 68%. This series is good meat for family audiences, especially in small towns, but will never show up for its real profit value in the percentage tables that are concerned with the million dollar pictures.

As usual, Guy Kibbee is starred and the supporting cast includes Bob Watson, Susan Peters, Emma Dunn and Monte Blue. Christy Cabanne directed for Producer Jerry Brandt.

(Continued on Page 12)

14 FEATURES "GOING DOWN"

	Was Now
Philadelphia Story	MGM 181 178
Ziegfeld Girl	MGM 150 146
Western Union	FOX 131 121
Great American Broadcast	FOX 106 102
Cheers for Miss Bishop	UA 90 88
Wagons Roll at Night	WAR 85 83
That Uncertain Feeling	UA 83 81
Power Dive	PAR 78 74
Blondie Goes Latin	COL 76 74
Ellery Queen's Penthouse	
Mystery	COL 78 70
Her First Beau	COL 72 70
Horror Island	UNIV 70 68
Man Made Monster	UNIV 70 67
Knockout	WAR 68 66

'Moon Over Miami' Good Musical Tonic for B.O.

20TH CENTURY-FOX

The Box Office Digest Estimates 125%

Producer Harry Joe Brown
 Director Walter Lang
 Screenplay Vincent Lawrence, Brown Ho'mes
 Adaptation George Seaton, Lynn Starling
 Original play Stephen Powys
 Lyrics and music Leo Robin, Ralph Rainger
 Featured: Don Ameche, Betty Grable, Robert Cummings, Charlotte Greenwood, Jack Haley, Carole Landis, Cobina Wright, Jr., Lyne Roberts, Robert Conway, George Lessey, Condos Brothers, Hermes Pan, Jack Cole and company, Robert Creig, Minor Watson, Fortunio Bonanova, George Humbert, Spencer Charters, Mel Ruick.
 Photographers Peverell Marley, Leon Shamroy, Allen M. Davey
 Time 98 minutes

"Moon Over Miami" is a corking concoction of musical entertainment. We say "concoction" because that is what Darryl Zanuck and his associate producer, Harry Joe Brown, have achieved.

They were wise enough to realize the audience doesn't care very much about story values in this type of show, they were double wise in selection of cast, and they were blessed by some top tune numbers from Leo Robin and Ralph Rainger. And any combination that gives you the right combination of personalities and melodies is pretty safe entertainment fodder.

Look at the varied talents in that cast line-up: Don Ameche, Betty Grable, Robert Cummings, Jack Haley, Carole Landis, Charlotte Greenwood. Seems almost impossible to miss, doesn't it? But it has been done with equally strong aggregations. Not in this case, however. The troupers troupe, the laughs and the notes of the octave fall here and there indiscriminately, and everybody seems to be having as good a time as the audience.

It is not quite on the epic scale of "That Night in Rio," with its smooth lined story and pace, but for an entertainment evening

Current Reviews

		We Est.
Moon Over Miami	FOX	125
Shepherd of the Hills	PAR	110
Underground	WAR	95
The Reluctant Dragon	RKO	90
The Big Store	MGM	85
The Parson of Panamint	PAR	85
Tight Shoes	UNIV	80
San Antonio Rose	UNIV	75

away from the war headlines it will satisfy your reviewer until another epic comes along.

Songs are what you will really be talking about after viewing the picture, though, any time you use that phrase, you must combine the numbers with the selling personalities. and the smooth direction by Walter Lang. "Oh Me, Oh Miami," will probably be the hit, but it isn't many steps ahead of a number of other good warbles, such as "I've Got You All to Myself," "Loveliness and Love," and "You Started Something."

Ameche and Grable have never seemed more at home than in this straight musical comedy formula. Since they are happy in the job, you only need to mention the names of such scene supporters as Robert Cummings, Charlotte Greenwood, Jack Haley, etc., to know that the entire evening's proceedings were very enjoyable.

The story is as frothy as any musical should be. It gives the melodic brush-off to the "Three Blind Mice" theme, in which

three gals set out to get their men. The gals have enough of a nest egg to finance one big Miami blitzkrieg, and that starts a plot sufficient to carry the Robin and Rainger songs to the fade-out title.

Technicolor helps, being keyed on a musical comedy scale. It is dressy and frothy.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: Fine entertainment for these days. You won't avoid the customers as they come out. Previewed June 15th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "'Moon Over Miami' proves several fundamentals that makers of filmusicals would do well to observe. Primarily this glittering song and dance show demonstrates the advantages of giving its singers something to sing, its dancers rhythms that set an audience to beating in time with the danceable music. You can come out of 'Moon Over Miami' humming strains of its tuneful score, something that hasn't happened in many months of musicals from Hollywood."

VARIETY: "For the average picture patron this piece of elegant filmusical will hit close to 100% entertainment satisfaction and will prosper accordingly."

'Parson of Panamint' Given Class By Sherman

HARRY SHERMAN-PARAMOUNT

The Box Office Digest Estimates 85%

Producer Harry Sherman
 Associate producer Lewis J. Rachmil
 Director William McGann
 Screenplay Harold Shumate, Adrian Scott
 From novel by Peter B. Kyne
 Stars Charles Ruggles, Ellen Drew, Philip Terry

Featured: Joseph Schildkraut, Porter Hall, Henry Kolker, Janet Beecher, Clem Bevans, Douglas Fowley, Paul Hurst, Frank Puglia, Minor Watson, Harry Hayden, Russell Hicks.

Photography Russell Harlan
 Time 84 minutes

Harry Sherman can always be trusted to use his knowledge of the outdoor formula and the showmanship it requires, so it is not a surprise to record "The Parson of Panamint" measures up for audience value. But the news is in the pleasing statement that Producer Sherman stepped beyond formula to give this latest of his special offerings extra production class in every department.

It is an offering concerning which Paramount and Sherman can feel very happy.

The picture suffers from only one drawback, the fact that it must be told in the flash-back treatment, as Charles Ruggles, year-worn prospector, narrates the yarn of a ghost mining camp. But directors and scripters hurdle this handicap with pretty fair success.

Maybe you haven't seen the Peter Kyne story in other versions, maybe you've seen alterations of it in half a dozen stolen versions. It is the one about the zealous dominie who comes to a hell-ridden mining town, and what happens to him, and to the town. Before all the happenings are over you have met all the stock characters of the old time mining town, you have been worked up to a near lynching of our parson hero.

But you will like the characters the way the players and Director McGann have presented them, even though their pattern is familiar. Ruggles, of course, is sure-fire as

a Chuckawalla Bill; Ellen Drew does a colorful dance hall girl; a Paramount youngster, Philip Terry, registers for future consideration; Joseph Schildkraut turns in one of his slick jobs as a gambler. (It's about time though that Schildkraut decides to grow up into real character roles, instead of trying to stick half way between glamour and what-have-you).

Supporting cast evidences Sherman's willingness to go the limit. He has been rewarded with a worth-while offering.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: About tops in Sherman's out-door offerings, so you know pretty well how to spot it. Previewed June 16th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "A genuine audience picture with a lot of heart, one which will make many new friends for the industry."

VARIETY: "Intensely moving and human drama is Peter B. Kyne's story of a fighting parson as brought to the screen by Harry Sherman."

'Shepherd of the Hills' Solid Heart-Throb Hit

PARAMOUNT

The Box Office Digest Estimates 110%

Producer Jack Moss
 Director Henry Hathaway
 Screenplay Grover Jones, Stuart Anthony
 Featured: John Wayne, Betty Field, Harry Carey, Beulah Bondi, James Barton, Samuel S. Hinds, Marjorie Main, Ward Bond, Marc Lawrence, John Qualen, Fuzzy Knight, Tom Fadden, Olin Howland.
 Photographer Charles Lang, Jr., W. Howard Greene
 Time 98 minutes

About once a season there is one of these home-like heart throb melodramas that comes along to kick a depression in its tenderest spot. We have a showman's hunch that "The Shepherd of the Hills" may do it this time.

It is easy to trace the path of memory and recall such tear-jerkers as "Stella Dallas," "The Girl of the Limberlost"—the original versions, that is—and you can even go back far enough to "Over the Hills to the Poor House," which broke a depression before many of our current producers had separated from diapers.

"Shepherd of the Hills" is heart throb at its best, dressed in wonderful Technicolor. Even while exhibitors are thinking that all they can sell is gags and music, it may be the bet that pulls a lot of those cash customers away from the comfortable radio-side seats which have held them for many weeks.

With all the cynical false front of our years chasing down the preview trail, we enjoyed the tear-promptings and rugged hemp of this picture. Associate producer Jack Moss and Henry Hathaway, as director, set out with forthright sincerity to give a very big potential audience the picture they would expect from "Shepherd of the Hills."

They delivered. Seldom has a cast been

selected to depict characters beloved by our parents in their adolescent days so capable of bringing these creations to real life and blood. That goes for the entire cast, down to the smallest role, a tribute to Moss and Hathaway as well as to the players.

But, of course, the burden must be carried and the honors bestowed on the tops—John Wayne, Harry Carey, and Betty Field.

Wayne has the toughest role to handle. He must be the semi-silent man-of-the-mountains, but he must have a one-track mind vengeance motive on his shoulders to motivate the entire picture. The character could have been written better, or else, possibly, there are scenes on the cutting room floor that did give it better shading. At any rate, Wayne comes through.

And he has competition. Betty Field registered pretty solidly in "Of Mice and Men," but box office frequently does not hinge on one picture. This time she has a ripe opportunity, and she makes the most of it. You will be seeing more of her.

Then we come to Harry Carey—whose thirty-odd anniversary in the industry was made the occasion for the picture's Hollywood preview. Harry has a role that is an actor's delight—if the actor is an actor. He is part of "The Passing of the Third Floor Back," "The Fool," "Girl of the Limberlost," and a myriad of subjects that have enriched theatrical history with a central character who portrayed, under varying circumstances, the faith and love that is within the best of us.

Carey's performance is superb. He gives it the spiritual quality with restraint, he gives it the underlying physical strength with the slightest of nuances.

Starting to talk about support is like trying to start at naming the words in a dictionary. If we miss any names we will have to say that it is because we are overloaded.

How, for example, could anyone differentiate in order of mention between such troupers as Beulah Bondi, James Barton, Marjorie Main, Sam Hinds, John Qualen, Ward Bond, Marc Lawrence, Fuzzy Knight and on and on.

Marjorie Main, for one to mention, gets one great opportunity when she regains her sight. If you do not shed a tear, you are not human. Hathaway has had Miss Main underplay her previous scenes as a victim of sightlessness, but when he hits this spot he and trouper gang up to sock it home. It is a powerful moment.

But so, also, is the comedy of Olin Howland, as an Ozark storekeeper, a contribution that will gain new parts for this fine trouper.

Exhibitors' Booking Suggestion: A solid tear-jerker dressed in class direction and playing, topped with Technicolor. Previewed June 14th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: Looking at it financially, Paramount's "Shepherd of the Hills" is cut to the pattern of "Trail of the Lonesome Pine," which Henry Hathaway also directed for a boxoffice smash five years ago. Looking at it artistically, it is a beautiful eloquent and exciting drama of the Ozarks hill people. Jack Moss has given the very popular Harold Bell Wright novel a magnificently faithful production investment and Hathaway has garbed it with heart-warming feeling and breathed a rare spark into it to give it pulsing life.

VARIETY: "'The Shepherd of the Hills' should be a heavy grosser, for it has beauty, simplicity, dramatic intensity, carefully calculated tear-jerking, acting that few of the performers in it have ever bettered, superlative direction and production. Moreover, it comes at a time when many fans are fed up with war pictures, and has about it the quality of charm and escape that ought to make it more than welcome in a war-weary world. The picture could, if it is exploited properly, do the business that was done by Paramount's earlier Harold Bell Wright story, "The Trail of the Lonesome Pine."

'Big Store' Spotty But Better Than Last Marx Pic

MGM

The Box Office Digest Estimates 85%

Producer Louis K. Sidney
 Director Charles Riesner
 Screenplay Sid Kuller, Hal Fimbarg, Ray Golden
 Original Nat Perrin
 Stars Groucho Marx, Chico Marx, Harpo Marx
 Featured: Tony Martin, Virginia Grey, Margaret Dumont, Douglass Dumbrille, William Tannen, Marion Martin, Virginia O'Brien, Henry Armetta, Anna Demetrio, Paul Stanton, Russell Hicks, Bradley Page.
 Photographer Charles Lawton
 Time 80 minutes

"The Big Store" is definitely laugh crazy in the zaniest Marx style. Its box office and general audience values will be determined solely by the well known worn phrase: "If you like the Marxes it's great; if you don't care for the Marx brand of humor, well—"

The production is definitely better keyed to the Marx talents, and more closely packed with whirlwind laugh situations than the last offering of the brothers. It gives the evidence, expected in most Marx offerings, of having been cut, trimmed, reshuffled and otherwise spread across the cutting room

floor before being cemented together.

But to those who are out for a night of laughs, and particularly those who can cure their headaches with a dose of Marx, such things as continuity and steadiness of pace will mean little. What if there are some slow spots? Producer Louis Sidney had a showman's knowledge of what he had to sell, and that's what he delivered.

"The Big Store" finds the Marx boys as combination house dicks and Tony Martin bodyguards in a big department store. Tony is one of the store's owners. The scripters take the premise of those characters, the opportunities offered by a department store's vast background possibilities, and just go to town in any direction they suspect there might be a laugh. Charles Reisner's direction uses every trick of a wily veteran at this sort of thing to keep the laughs real howls, and dodge the possibly slow plot moments.

Novelty numbers are as abundant as a three-decker Palace Theater vaudeville bill.

Harpo's harp number is this time dressed up with a mirror setting that makes it something to talk about. There is the expected wild and wierd chase finish—but you'll have to get DT's to imagine half of the things in this particular chase.

Unfortunately, at least to this reviewer's ear, none of the numerous song numbers register as potential hits. They are what you call "good," but there you stop.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: The Marx draw slipped in recent pictures, but where you can hit with your audience by giving them high-water laughs this is a sure-fire item. Previewed June 12th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "Pretty much of a hit and miss affair is "The Big Store," rumored as the final appearance before a motion picture camera of the Marx brothers as a team. It is to be reported however, that the misses, wide though they are, cannot be charged to want of trying on the parts of Groucho, Chico and Harpo, or their able director—all of whom are constantly in there pit-ting."

VARIETY: "If your clientele likes the Marxes this is sure b. o. bait."

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BUD ABBOTT AND LOU CO

"IN THE

A UNIVERSAL
PICTURE

INNER OF THE WEEK

Lou Costello Bud Abbott



OUR COMEDY MATERIAL
by JOHN GRANT

OUR SPECIAL WRITER

Our Pal and Manager
EDWARD SHERMAN

Completed
"OH CHARLIE"

Directed by
ARTHUR LUBIN
For Universal

Our Representatives
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STELLO DICK POWELL

NAVY"

A UNIVERSAL
PICTURE

'Underground' Could Easily Start Shooting War

WARNERS

The Box Office Digest Estimates 95%

Associate producer William Jacobs
 Director Vincent Sherman
 Screenplay Charles Grayson
 Original Edwin Justus Mayer,
 Oliver H. P. Garrett
 Stars Jeffrey Lynn, Philip Dorn,
 Kaaren Verne
 Featured: Mona Maris, Peter Whitney, Martin
 Kosleck, Erwin Kalser, Elka Gruning, Frank
 Reicher, Egon Brecher, Ludwig Stossel, Hans
 Schumm, Wolfgang Zilzer, Roland Varno,
 Henry Brandon, Lotte Palfi, Lisa Golm,
 Louis Arco, Roland Drew.
 Photographer Sid Hockox
 Time 94 minutes

It all depends on how the currently very ticklish picture theater audience will take it. It would require the seventy-seventh son of a seventy-seventh son to guess at that factor with any pretense at confidence in his prophecy.

There are certain things about "Underground" which are definite. It is powerful drama, superbly written, directed and played. That is on the positive side.

Then there are the elements where doubt intrudes. The picture is out and out propaganda of the type that has not been seen since Uncle Carl Laemmle cashed in on "The Kaiser, Beast of Berlin." (Poor Uncle Carl lived to regret that success, because

when he visited his home scenes after the war, he came very close to the Teutonic version of an American lynching.)

That's the doubtful part. The cash customers haven't shown any evidence that they are far enough in the war yet to go out to picture theaters with their hard-earned two bits to get lectures. Their feelings may be all with the producer—but that isn't what they spend their folding money and relaxation time for when they approach the exhibitor's wicket.

So much for the exhibition problems.

Now for the picture.

It is a great job. It goes all-out to tell the story and deliver the message which the producers have decided to transmit, and it does it with skill. Director Vincent Sherman, recently praised, but by no means a veteran, is no flash in the pan. He builds his tension, punctuates his scenes, with a master's hand.

The cast, in the main, is the pick of Hollywood's foreign actors and they must have been performing a labor of love so well do sympathy and hatred arise as their roles require. Scripting is crisp and punchy.

The story lets us in on a "wishful thinking" version of the Germany of today. We are watching the "Underground" forces at work in Hitlerland, the forces on whom

many hopes are pinned for his collapse. The story is told through the lives of two brothers—one disguising his secret activities against Hitler by pretending patriotism, but eventually in the shadow of the Gestapo; the other, a returned wounded veteran, fanatically loyal to the Nazi regime, who unwittingly brings about his brother's downfall.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: A clean-up for certain metropolitan centers; a worried headache for exhibitors in many other spots. Previewed June 18th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "Just as Warners pulled no punches in making "Confessions of a Nazi Spy," the subject of a German revolution against the Hitler regime is approached fearlessly in "Underground." The result is a dramatic screen bombshell, powerfully written and directed, provocatively performed by a strong cast of character artists. How much wishful thinking enters into the facts reported is not for this reviewer to say, but if "Underground" fails to be a smash attraction, it will only be because Americans cannot be coaxed into spending entertainment dollars for any Nazi theme."

VARIETY: "'Underground' is harsh and heavy melodrama, spun at a tripping pace as it unfolds the brave exploits of a small band of patriots, working under cover to upset National Socialism in Nazi Germany. A finely-told picture in every respect. Its box office fate will depend upon the entertainment mood of the theatre patrons."

'San Antonio Rose' Top Notch Budget Number

UNIVERSAL

The Box Office Digest Estimates 75%

Associate producer Ken Goldsmith
 Director Charles Lamont
 Screenplay Hugh Wedlock, Jr., Howard
 Snyder, Paul Gerald Smith
 Original Jack Lait, Jr.
 Featured: Jane Frazee, Robert Paige, Eve Arden,
 Lon Chaney, Jr., Shemp Howard, Mary Lou
 Cook, Joe McMichael, Ted McMichael, Judd
 McMichael, Richard Lane, Louis DaPrun,
 Charles Lang, Roy Harris, Peter Sullivan,
 Richard Davies, Luis Alberni, Frank Mitchell.
 Photographer Stanley Cortez
 Art Director Jack Otterson
 Time 64 minutes

We arrived home after this preview with the very cheerful feeling of having had a good time, and then we awoke the next morning to read a Los Angeles daily's review which damned it with mule-like subtlety by merely listing the number of songs that are in the picture.

The reviewer is just about as far behind what Mr. and Mrs. John Xantippus Public are paying cash for—that same coin for which the exhibitor is waiting with the well known bated breath—as his parent paper is behind knowledge of current mass thought. (They haven't elected a local candidate since Pio Pico got a bit of writing in Spanish. And, they had nothing to do with that).

"San Antonio Rose" is one of the pictures that the industry should encourage. Sure, we will admit it, there is a song or a happening every minute. But gosh, it's great

fun to go to a movie these days and discover that someone is trying to give you an evening of fun. You could have "stood up in bed" like a certain prize-fight manager and enjoyed the radio without putting slippers on; you wouldn't be paying a nickel towards the salaries of picture makers or picture exhibitors. But why crack down on the guys who think pictures are made to sell tickets?

Okay, we admit it. We have been hot under the collar. Here is our defense: "San Antonio Rose" is a budget picture; it will never be expected to break a Radio City Music Hall record; but it has been written, directed, and guided so as to jell—congealed might be the more correct word—showmanship elements for sixty-four minutes.

Put Garbo up on the marquee if you want to, but stick around until the customers smile on their exit over corn beef and cabbage like this one. Cast won't help for your marquee, though, if some producer is wise, there is the makings of a great team in Lon Chaney, Jr., and Shemp Howard. Too bad, but maybe not too late, for Hal Roach's series of soldier yarns. The team is sure-fire.

One important fact can be summed up in a sentence: The Merry Macs alone are worth the price of admission.

As a matter of fact all the support—in

the budget class—is good enough to make us reluctant to mention names. Director Charles Lamont, who usually does his best with kids, and a great job he has done with them, comes through with a real show. Ken Goldsmith wrapped it up as associate producer.

Seen to definite advantage are the two leads, Bob Paige and Jane Frazee. Both are going places.

Three writers are mentioned on the script credits, and nothing should be taken away from any of them. It is a workmanlike job. But our ears detected the whiplash of a Paul Gerard Smith line ever and ever so often. And we think Smith must have just unbuttoned a few spasms of his Big Town show experience.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: A good buy for the proper spot on the bill. Good comedy, and an overflow of worthwhile songs. Previewed June 11th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "Universal has done pretty well with pictures titled for popular songs, and it is reasonable to expect 'San Antonio Rose' will better the average in its market."

VARIETY: "'San Antonio Rose' is the latest attempt by Universal to hang one of its program musicals around a song title. The best thing about it is the Merry Macs and their vocalizing. There is enough good work by other cast members, including Jane Frazee's pert personality and voice, the comedy of Shemp Howard, and a number of singable tunes, to rate it as average supporting fare."

'The Reluctant Dragon' Okay as a Novelty

WALT DISNEY - RKO

The Box Office Digest Estimates 90%

Producer Walt Disney
 Director Alfred Werker
 Screenplay Ted Sears, Al Perkins, Larry Clemmons, Bill Cottrell, Harry Clark
 Featured: Robert Benchley, Frances Gifford, Buddy Pepper, Nana Bryant, Clarence Nash, Florence Gill, Hamilton McFadden, Alan Ladd, Maurice Murphy, Jean Fenwick, Jimmy Luske, Verna Hillie, Walt Disney, Norm Ferguson, Ward Kimball and others.
 Photographer Bert Glennon, Winton Hoch
 Time 73 minutes

"The Reluctant Dragon" is another Walter Disney experiment in the art of making pictures that he thinks audiences should want, which may or may not be an improvement over the old rule of thumb which said pictures should be made for what the audiences want.

The technical skill and thought that has gone into "The Reluctant Dragon" cannot be denied. You and I, and the rest of us who consider ourselves moving picture "experts," could look at a reel or two more of it. We would be joined by the sophomores who know the meaning of a new phrase "motion picture appreciation."

But for those of us in business, we would find our fellow guests—the cash customers

—yawning long before the seventy-three minutes of the picture had unfurled.

There is no getting away from it—the cartoon was made for single reelers, Technicolor gave it blood enough to stand up for two reels; but once in a decade you will get a "Snow White," and the other nine years you get subjects that should have been broken up into eatable slices.

"The Reluctant Dragon" has industrial value—possibly some to sell the stockholders—for a reel or two or three while it purports to tell the inside of cartoon film making. This portion, seen through the eyes and heard through the stuttering of Robert Benchley, is as good an industrial as the industry has produced.

Then we get down to more formal entertainment. And three short subjects, one about the goofy horse, the second about Baby Weems, and the finale about our Ferdinand-dragon. The educational part of the subject would have been a good money-maker for itself, and one of the three shorts could have clicked; Benchley isn't hard to take; but add them all together for one feature meal and it just doesn't spell Prudence Penny.

Some of our colleagues in the "cricket" profession seem to think that doors will be broken down by customers avidly seeking to learn the secrets of what makes Mickey a mouse. It has been our show experience over many years that after learning the secret, they may lose permanent interest in Mickey.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: Strictly a freak, with nothing extra in drawing power. If you have one of those Wardman Park, Washington, D. C. theatres where the guests arrive in soup and fish, they will chuckle loudly. Previewed June 15th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "The Reluctant Dragon" can only be judged by standards of entertainment, and its standards are high. It is a novelty that audiences should find most enjoyable."

VARIETY: "This is another extension of Walt Disney's picture making media and methods, an interesting venture into the possibilities of combining cartoon animation with the live action of real personalities. In it Disney demonstrates the screen still has vast unexplored or barely touched territory of visual and oral entertainment. And it is not only appropriate but also a fascinating subject that the producer takes his own plant in Burbank as the background and structure for his adventure of "The Reluctant Dragon."

'Tight Shoes' Has Its Good Moments

MAYFAIR-UNIVERSAL

The Box Office Digest Estimates 80%

Director Albert S. Rogell
 Screenplay Leonard Spigelgass, Art Arthur
 Original Damon Runyon
 Featured: John Howard, Binnie Barnes, Brod Crawford, Anne Gwynne, Leo Carrillo, Samuel S. Hinds, Shemp Howard, Richard Lane, Sarah Padden, Ed Gargan, Elmar Jackson, Robert Emmett O'Connor, Tom Dugan.
 Photographer Elwood Bredell
 Time 67 minutes

"Tight Shoes" is light on marquee value, which is going to curtail its first run value. And while it is fairly healthy in entertainment values, it will have spotty receptions. The "wise guys" who think and phrase with Damon Runyon may consider it something of an epic; but there will be many audiences forty-five minutes from Broadway or the same distance from Hollywood who will say, "So what?" They just won't get the Damon Runyon characters, or the over-their-heads satire of the script.

Put it down as a heck of a good filler, but nothing on which to bank the evening's receipts.

The story is as human as all Damon Runyon yarns. It is told—in celluloid—clumsily. All exhibitors—those poor slaves who know what is poison and what is not—will recognize what we mean when we say it is told in retrospect. Gosh, how many good pictures have withered under the retrospect and flashback method of treatment.

But "Tight Shoes" still has those Damon Runyon characterizations, no matter what the film mill did to them, so it winds up a fairly good show. If you can get them inside the house there will be enough of them to vote it great fun.

The story gets under way when a newspaperman is reminded of something—that

brings in the retrospect. In this case it is a yarn about a shoe clerk who sold a pair of tight shoes to a gangster, and a spontaneous chain of circumstances started that involves shoe clerking, racketeering, politics, and winds up with "they lived happily ever after" endings.

Cast is sparkling under Al Rogell's direction. Binnie Barnes gets the high spots, and romps to town. It is one of the best jobs she had an opportunity to handle in a year or more.

John Howard is very good, continuing to register the progress that Box Office Digest has been prophesying for him for the past year.

Support is excellent, with Shemp Howard and Broderick Crawford getting the high-lighted opportunities.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: Pretty safe mass fare. Previewed June 8th.

What the Other Fellows Said:

REPORTER: "Anything goes for laughs in Jules Levey's Mayfair production of "Tight Shoes," and Hollywood's fondness for Damon Runyon stories is again justified with a hit picture."

VARIETY: "This is a very funny picture." And probably the closest interpretation of the Damon Runyon humor that has been yet brought to the screen."

MONDAY NIGHT IS "SESSIONS" NIGHT

"IT" CAFE

— NEVER A COVER OR MINIMUM CHARGE —

DINING - DANCING - ENTERTAINMENT

Hollywood Plaza Hotel

1637 No. Vine St.

'In The Navy' Tops for Week

(Continued from Page 5)

RKO's third and last release this week is another in the Saint series "THE SAINT TAKES A HOLIDAY," 60%. These pictures seem to have little first run value but will get by in the nabes as fillers.

As "THE SAINT'S VACATION" picture was produced in England and there are no players in it familiar to American audiences; the leads are portrayed by Hugh Sinclair and Sally Gray, William Siström produced and Leslie Fenton directed.

WARNERS—Also 3 Releases

Warners-First National, like RKO, also have three releases; one a fairly good feature and two rather weak programmers.

Warners' first is the new Priscilla Lane feature, "MILLION DOLLAR BABY," which is getting by quite well at a 93% average. Incidentally this picture was originally sold to exhibitors as "Miss Wheelwright Discovers America." This comedy with music has been fairly well received as a whole, although it is a bit long, running 1 hour and 45 minutes.

Seen opposite Miss Lane is Jeffrey Lynn and the featured cast is headed by Ronald Reagan, Helen Westley, Mae Robson, and George Barbier. Curtis Bernhardt directed and David Lewis acted as associate producer to Hal Wallis.

Warners third and last release this week, modern tropical melodrama "SINGAPORE WOMAN" that is doing rather poorly—only 68%—probably due to the lack of marquee names. Brenda Marshall and David Bruce are co-starred with Virginia Field, Jerome Cowan and Rose Hobart featured. This one will build but won't sell tickets as the figures have indicated.

Gene Negulesco directed and Harlan Thompson was associate producer. "THE NURSE'S SECRET," 62%, is likewise an entertaining story but it isn't pulling any business as there are absolutely no marquee names. Lee Patrick, Regis Toomey and Julia Bishop are featured. Noel Smith directed for the Byron Foy unit.

COLUMBIA—1 Release

Columbia's new picture this week "SHE KNEW ALL THE ANSWERS," 88%, is their best release since "Penny Serenade."

Here is another picture that in normal times would be doing at least 10% better, or probably even more. It is an audience natural, and the exhibitor who books it can be sure that when the night is over his cash customers will start for the fireside very well contented. There are few enough of such pictures these days, so it is a tip to

the exhibitor to get the most out of "She Knew All the Answers."

This modern farce comedy co-stars Joan Bennett and Franchot Tone. The featured cast is headed by John Hubbard, Eve Arden and William Tracy.

Richard Wallace directed and Bill Pierce acted as associate producer to Charles R. Rogers.

"SHE KNEW ALL THE ANSWERS" is the first of a series of productions that Mr. Rogers is making for Columbia for the present season.

REPUBLIC—Also 1 Release

Republic's release this week is the John Wayne starrer "THE LADY FROM LOUISIANA," 80%, which with the present exception of "Sis Hopkins" is their best money-maker this year. John Wayne's name has been seen on many major releases in the past year and that fact plus the big production value and locale of this story—New Orleans—in the gay 90's has undoubtedly helped this one considerably at the box office.

Seen opposite John Wayne is Ona Munson (Belle Watling in "G. W. T. W."). The featured cast includes Henry Stephenson, Helen Westley and Raymond Middleton.

Bernard Vorhaus was the producer-director.

FOX—2 Releases

Twentieth Century-Fox has two new programmers this week, neither of special importance.

The best of these is the "COWBOY AND THE BLONDE" which co-stars Mary Beth Hughes and George Montgomery. This is a very entertaining little comedy romance that would probably pull much stronger houses if it had more marquee value; but to say the least it will make a much better than average filler.

Alan Mowbray, Robert Conway, John Miljan are featured. Raymond McCarey directed for two producers Ralph Dietrich and Walter Morosco.

Twentieth Century-Fox's second release this week is "THE GREAT COMMANDMENT," which on a very few bookings is only averaging 66%. This biblical subject was made by an independent producer, John T. Coyle, and his associate, Reverend James Friedrich and the distribution is being handled by Fox.

As "THE GREAT COMMANDMENT" is not a regular run-of-the-mill picture it should be handled in a special manner. Exhibitors should screen it first and then if they decide to run it should make a tie-up with their community organizations.

John Beal, the star, is probably the only player in the cast that is known to picture fans and he has had very few pictures in the past few years. Irving Pichel directed.

The Highlighter

★Continued from Page Four

umpty hundred thousands of expenditures. . . . Seems as though you can't teach an old lion new tricks. . . . Problem involved here is that both the animals and the youngster playing the important role may both grow to manhood before the execs get the thing straightened out. . . . At least they have one consolation, Spencer Tracy never grows any older. . . . Irving Cummings hardly has "Belle Starr" out of the cutting room before he must wind up again to start "Louisiana Purchase." . . . With those two hitting the market at the peak of next season's ticket-selling season, Cummings will be off to a flying start for money-making honors. . . . Daniel O'Shea, well-liked and efficient David Selznick executive, has been upped to a post as executive vice-president. . . . The Pipeline Reports: Sneaks on Greg LaCava's "Unfinished Business" bring back glowing raves about Preston Foster, who gives plenty of worry to co-stars Irene Dunne and Robert Montgomery with a great performance. . . . Pipeline also says the picture, a probable August release, is real box office. . . . Director James Hogan has done it again, a habit he has. . . . Confined to budget pictures in recent years, he always seems to turn out the ones that go above expectations based on their cost. . . . "Power Dive" is the latest, the Thomas-Pine offering. . . . Paramount's home office has ordered it into the percentage class on booking. . . . A bouquet too, for Thomas and Pine for getting off to a "Power Dive" start on their independent production schedule. . . . Dave Butler has broad smiles these days over the reports coming from the East on "Caught in the Draft."



FOR REVIEWS
THAT SPEAK
DOLLARS AND "SENSE"

It's Box Office Digest



What Happened THIS WEEK ?

The Week's Technical Job:

The beautifully shot background shots for "Moon Over Miami." . . . A miracle in richness and skill. Particularly one sequence where two motorboat puddle jumpers—one supposedly bearing Bob Cummings and Betty Grable, the other the pursuing Don Ameche—give the audience a socko kick. . . . All the picturesque Florida backgrounds are so perfectly balanced—and in Technicolor—that the picture is a model in this respect.

The Week's Thought:

In these days when showmanship is more needed than ever—or so the box office figures tell us—the quality of trailers is slumping terrifically. . . . Your Wandering Reporter sees quite a few in the course of a week. . . . Darn few recently that would sell him a picture. . . . And in many cases he has already caught the picture and knows it is a good attraction. Far better than the "selling" trailer. . . . Are some of the producers getting economy-foolish on their trailer departments, or are the exhibitors slumping back into the canned junk?

The Week's Powerful Scene:

In that thrill-packed "Underground," the moment when the two brothers—Philip Dorn and Jeffrey Lynn—face each other before a stern Nazi chief. . . . Lynn, always pro-Nazi but finally coming around to a realization that he is wrong, must face his own brother and denounce him. . . . Martin Koslech is great as the commander. Lynn and Dorn tops, and Sherman's direction a treat.

The Week's Strategic Retreat:

On the part of the producers in connection with the preview problem. . . . Now it is worse. . . . Because now the reviewers are considering petitioning the United Service Organizations to open a flop house in Glendale, so strong is the monopoly held by the Alexander there and so irritating the traffic trip back and forth. . . . Particularly when some other companies may have had morning and afternoon previews the same day. . . . And the weissenheimer Glendale audiences know about the preview plenty in advance. . . . Can it be a Machiavellian idea that has the critics swallowing their own black medicine?



THE BATTING AVERAGES

1941

Producers and Associate Producers

	Pictures	%
Joseph Mankiewicz	1	178
David Hempstead	1	143
Paul Jones	2	139
Pan Berman	2	137
Robert Kane	1	134
John Considine	1	131
Harry Joe Brown	1	127
Bruce Manning	1	126
William Perlberg	1	125
Irving Asher	1	125
William Cagney	1	124
Arthur Hornblow, Jr.	1	123
Alex Gottlieb	2	122
Victor Saville	1	113
Frank Ross	1	110
Mark Hellinger	1	110
Fred Kohlmar	2	109
Joseph Pasternak	2	104
Henry Blanke	3	103

Producer-Directors

	Pictures	%
Frank Capra	1	137
Alexander Korda	1	128
George Stevens	1	127
E. H. Griffith	2	116
Clarence Brown	1	107
Herbert Wilcox	1	101

Actresses

	Pictures	%
Ginger Rogers	1	143
Barbara Stanwyck	2	129
Vivien Leigh	1	128
Myrna Loy	1	127
Irene Dunne	1	127
Rosalind Russell	1	125
Olivia de Havilland	1	124
Bette Davis	1	118
Deanna Durbin	1	118
Carole Lombard	1	118
Madeleine Carroll	2	116
Alice Faye	2	115
Joan Crawford	1	113
Ida Lupino	1	110
Jean Arthur	1	110
Hedy Lamarr	1	107
Margaret Sullavan	2	106
Anna Neagle	1	101

Directors

	Pictures	%
Victor Schertzinger	1	157
Robert Leonard	1	146
George Cukor	2	146
Rouben Mamoulian	1	134
George B. Seitz	1	133
Norman Taurog	1	131
John Ford	1	130
Irving Cummings	1	127
Sam Wood	1	127
Fritz Lang	1	127
Jack Conway	1	127
Robert Stevenson	1	126
David Miller	1	125
Al Hall	1	125
Mitchell Leisen	1	123
Preston Sturges	1	120
Edmund Goulding	1	118
William Seiter	1	118
Alfred Hitchcock	1	118
Raoul Walsh	2	117
Frank Borzage	1	115
Michal Curtiz	1	112
Arthur Lubin	3	105
Archie Mayo	1	102

Actors

	Pictures	%
Bing Crosby	1	157
Bob Hope	1	157
Cary Grant	2	153
Gary Cooper	1	137
Tyrone Power	1	134
James Stewart	4	132
Mickey Rooney	2	132
Spencer Tracy	1	131
Laurence Olivier	1	128
Randolph Scott	1	127
Don Ameche	1	127
William Powell	1	127
Charles Boyer	1	126
James Cagney	1	124
Ray Millard	1	123
Abbott and Costello	2	122
Robert Taylor	2	120
Henry Fonda	1	120
Fred MacMurray	2	116
Edward G. Robinson	1	112
Melvyn Douglas	3	104
Robert Young	2	100

All Major Features Released in 1941

A

OVER \$500,000

Philadelphia Story	MGM.....	178
Road to Zanzibar	PAR.....	157
Ziegfeld Girl	MGM.....	146
Kitty Foyle	RKO.....	143
Meet John Doe	WAR.....	137
Men of Boys Town	MGM.....	131
Tobacco Road	FOX.....	130
Blood and Sand	FOX.....	134
That Hamilton Woman	UA.....	128
Western Union	FOX.....	127
Penny Serenade	COL.....	127
That Night in Rio	FOX.....	127
Flight Command	MGM.....	126
Back Street	UNIV.....	126
Billy the Kid	MGM.....	125
Strawberry Blonde	WAR.....	124
I Wanted Wings	PAR.....	123
Lady Eve	PAR.....	120
Virginia	PAR.....	120
The Great Lie	WAR.....	118
Nice Girl?	UNIV.....	118
Mr. and Mrs. Smith	RKO.....	118
Love Crazy	MGM.....	118
Woman's Face	MGM.....	113
The Sea Wolf	WAR.....	112
One Night in Lisbon	PAR.....	111
The Devil and Miss Jones	RKO.....	110
Come Live With Me	MGM.....	107
Great American Broadcast	FOX.....	107
Sunny	RKO.....	101
Pot O' Gold	UA.....	96
Hudson's Bay	FOX.....	94
Son of Monte Cristo	UA.....	87
Lady From Cheyenne	UNIV.....	86
So Ends Our Night	UA.....	85
That Uncertain Feeling	UNIV.....	81
Flame of New Orleans	UNIV.....	80
Victory	PAR.....	78

B

FROM \$200,000 TO \$500,000

In the Navy	UNIV.....	136
Andy Hardy's Private Secretary	MGM.....	133
This Thing Called Love	COL.....	125
High Sierra	WAR.....	110
Million Dollar Baby	WAR.....	93
Cheers For Miss Bishop	UA.....	88
Footsteps In The Dark	WAR.....	86
Bad Man	MGM.....	86
Topper Returns	UA.....	84
She Knew All The Answers	COL.....	84
Wagons Rolls at Night	WAR.....	83
Maisie Was a Lady	MAN.....	83
Adam Had Four Sons	COL.....	82
Mad Doctor	PAR.....	81
A Girl, A Guy, and a Gob	RKO.....	80
Affectionately Yours	WAR.....	80
Tail, Dark and Handsome	FOX.....	78
Texas Rangers Ride Again	PAR.....	78
Invisible Woman	UNIV.....	78
They Dare Not Love	COL.....	77
Three on a Honeymoon	WAR.....	77
Round Up	PAR.....	77
People vs. Dr. Kildare	MGM.....	76
Model Wife	UNIV.....	76
Las Vegas Nights	PAR.....	76
Sis Hopkins	REP.....	76
Reaching For the Sun	PAR.....	75
You're the One	PAR.....	73
Romance of the Rio Grande	FOX.....	73
Blonde Inspiration	MGM.....	73
Washington Melodrama	MGM.....	72
Life with Henry	PAR.....	72
Golden Hoops	FOX.....	72
Road Show	UA.....	71
Keeping Company	MGM.....	71
Flight From Destiny	WAR.....	70
Man Who Lost Himself	UNIV.....	70
Black Cat	UNIV.....	70
Rage in Heaven	MGM.....	70
The Penalty	MGM.....	69
Wild Man of Borneo	MGM.....	68
They Met in Argentina	FOX.....	67
Murder Among Friends	FOX.....	66
Hard Boiled Canary	PAR.....	63

C

FROM \$100,000 TO \$200,000

Buck Privates	UNIV.....	108
Six Lessons from Madame Lazonga	UNIV.....	80
Lady From Louisiana	REP.....	78
Ellery Queen Penthouse Mystery	COL.....	78
Blondie Goes Latin	COL.....	74
Scotland Yard	FOX.....	74
Phantom Submarine	COL.....	72
Play Girl	RKO.....	72
Trial of Mary Dugan	MGM.....	72
A Dangerous Game	UNIV.....	72
Cowboy and the Blonde	FOX.....	72
Free and Easy	MGM.....	72
Ride on Vaquero	FOX.....	71
Double Date	UNIV.....	71
Face Behind the Mask	COL.....	71
Ride, Kelly, Ride	FOX.....	71
Boston Blackie	COL.....	71
Her First Beau	COL.....	71
Ellery Queen Penthouse Mystery	COL.....	70
Mutiny in the Arctic	UNIV.....	70
Dead Men Tell	FOX.....	70
Devil Commands	COL.....	70
Sleepers West	FOX.....	70
Great Mr. Nobody	WAR.....	70
The Monster and the Girl	PAR.....	70
Lucky Devils	UNIV.....	70
Where Did You Get That Girl	RKO.....	70
Convoy	WAR.....	70
She Couldn't Say No	FOX.....	70
Michael Shayne, Private Detective	FOX.....	70
The Case of the Black Parrot	WAR.....	70
Lone Wolf Takes A Chance	COL.....	70

D

BELOW \$100,000

Power Dive	PAR.....	74
Under Age	COL.....	70
The Great Swindle	COL.....	70
Barnyard Follies	REP.....	69
Great Commandment	FOX.....	68
Bowery Boy	REP.....	68
Petticoat Politics	REP.....	68
Road to the Press	MONO.....	67
Phantom of Chinatown	MONO.....	67
Arkansas Judge	REP.....	67
Sign of the Wolf	MONO.....	66
Mr. District Attorney	REP.....	66
Chamber of Horrors	MONO.....	65
Great Train Robbery	REP.....	64
Thieves Fall Out	WAR.....	64
Footlight Fever	WAR.....	64
Land of Liberty	MGM.....	63
Missing Ten Days	COL.....	63
Pride of the Bowery	MONO.....	63
Nurse's Secret	WAR.....	62
Invisible Ghost	MONO.....	62
Shot in the Dark	WAR.....	62
Flying Wild	MONO.....	62
Her First Romance	MONO.....	62
You're Out of Luck	MONO.....	62
The Big Boss	COL.....	61
The Old Swimming Hole	MONO.....	60

Coming . . .
"THE OUTLAW"

Box Office

DIGEST

VOLUME 12, NO. 27

HOLLYWOOD, CALIF., JULY 15, 1941



CURRENT PREVIEWS

TOM, DICK AND HARRY
MY LIFE WITH CAROLINE
LADY BE GOOD
PARACHUTE BATTALION
ELLERY QUEEN AND THE
PERFECT CRIME
HURRY, CHARLIE, HURRY
THE STARS LOOK DOWN
SWEETHEART OF THE
CAMPUS
THE OFFICER AND THE
LADY



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The Box Office
Reports:

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FILMS AND SCIENCES

Twentieth's "Moon Over Miami" Tops

See Page 5

The Box Office

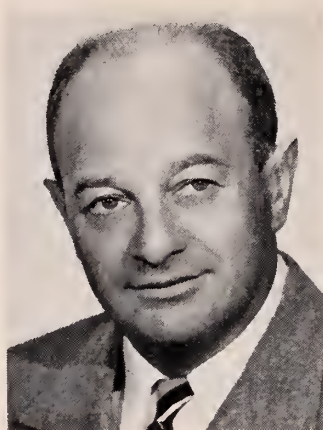
DIGEST "HONOR BOX"

The Biggest Grossing Release Of The Past Week

**This Week TWENTIETH CENTURY FOX wins with
"MOON OVER MIAMI" 118%**



Vice-Pres. in Charge of Production
DARRYL F. ZANUCK



Associate Producer
HARRY JOE BROWN



Director
WALTER LANG

Screenplay
VINCENT LAWRENCE
BROWN HOLMES

Original Play
STEPHEN POWYS

Adaptation
GEORGE SEATON
LYNN STARLING



Music and Lyrics
RALPH RAINGER **LEO ROBIN**

Featured
CHARLOTTE GREENWOOD
CAROLE LANDIS
COBINA WRIGHT, JR.
LYNNE ROBERTS
ROBERT CONWAY
GEORGE LESSEY
CONDOS BROTHERS
HERMES PAN
JACK COLE AND CO.
ROBERT CREIG
MINOR WATSON



ROBERT CUMMINGS



DON AMECHE



BETTY GRABLE



JACK HALEY

The Box Office **DIGEST**

*The Industry's
Distinctive Weekly*

GO OUT AND SELL!

An Editorial by ROBERT E. WELSH

From New York a few weeks ago came the news that one major company had summarily discharged its entire field exploitation force.

And this as we approach the selling season—and we mean selling to both the exhibitor and to the public—that is probably going to demand more high-powered exploitation than any in a decade.

This at a time when the news that should be coming from New York every day would read: "All majors enlarging field exploitation forces. Local men will be on job to arouse exhibitor interest and then help exhibitors get the money to the box office."

That's what we should be reading.

★ ★ ★

Why is it that this industry has to take all its slumps and temporary depressions lying down? Why is it that when the dog days come, as they do with such frequency over the span of years, you can ask the supposedly well-posted experts to what they ascribe the trouble and all they can do is shrug the shoulders and mutter, "I dunno, it's a mystery."

The old pat phrase, "We're not getting enough good pictures," has been worn threadbare.

Your humble Editor has been here and hereabouts in this industry for more years than he cares to count, but he can never recall a year when a fellow who wanted to say it couldn't declaim: "We are not getting enough good pictures."

There never will be enough good pictures—if by "enough" you mean that ALL pictures must be topnotchers.

It isn't in the cards. The structure of the industry, from its manufacturing necessities to those of its retailers, is just not geared that way.

We have only one place to sell—at the theater. Our retailer is the exhibitor.

The exhibitor has only one thing to sell—TIME. Three hundred and sixty-five days a year. He can't sell only one hundred of those days to his neighbors and expect to come out even; he can't even do it selling two hundred. He is in the business of selling beautifully upholstered seats to the public for every possible day of those three hundred and sixty-five.

And the seat he didn't sell yesterday can't be sold today.

★ ★ ★

That means he—and we—are in a volume business. Volume is the only way to meet the challenge of time that must be sold.

Which brings the pressure back to the manufacturer—the producer. He too must fight time. To keep the retailers in

business the factories must produce volume. To keep the individual factories in business, the distribution department must get all possible of that time which the exhibitor has available. And all he has is what the calendar dictates.

To grab that time the manufacturer takes terrific gambles. Sometimes he clicks, sometimes he flops. But always there is the pressure of that fight for dates on him—demanding volume—and necessarily involving the constant danger of having that volume fall short of 100% AAA quality.

So we say, let's look elsewhere than the pat phrase "Not enough good pictures" for the bromide for our headaches.

★ ★ ★

Let's look within our own merchandising set-up.

Isn't it possible that there is a missing link somewhere between our jobber, (the exchange), the exhibitor, and the public?

Is our chain complete when Hollywood has done its best to make a worthy piece of merchandise, the distributor has done his long-range best with national exploitation, press sheets, etc., and then the merchandise passes into the exhibitor's hands without further effort to go right to the ticket buyer?

Live wire local exchange exploitation men, knowing their exhibitors, their neighbors, concentrating on every possible dollar for every one of those three hundred and sixty-five days in the year are the answer.

And, perhaps, the answer could be expanded to this:

Make pictures containing some element that can be SOLD; then go out and SELL it.

But the first part of that last sentence is a subject for another day.

DISTRIBUTORS' BATTING AVERAGE FOR 1941

		%
1. Metro-Goltwyn-Mayer	24 Releases	93
2. Paramount	18 Releases	92
3. United Artists	9 Releases	89
4. Twentieth Century-Fox	22 Releases	87
5. Warners-First National	25 Releases	82
6. Universal	23 Releases	81
7. RKO-Radio	16 Releases	80
8. Columbia	23 Releases	76
9. Republic	12 Releases	69
10. Monogram	11 Releases	64

The Highlighter: **Covers the Picture News Front in a Quick Glance**

Well, we have had our first experience with "consent decree" showings and we are still up a tree . . . Of course, our personal knowledge is confined to the Los Angeles territory, and it is too early for our field men to give up reactions from the outlying precincts. . . . There are some four hundred theaters serviced with film out of the Los Angeles exchanges, quite a few of course grouped under combined ownership. But it didn't show any great appetite to view the coming product when something like only fifteen or twenty exhibitors yawned through the showing of "Lady Be Good" in a drearily empty 600 seat house. Maybe it wasn't an indication for the future, nor could RKO's showing of "Parachute Battalion" in the afternoon be taken as a definite prognostication, since the MGM showing was at 10:30 A. M., on the day that most exhibitors have that visit to the bank to make, and other odd jobs picking up the pieces after the week-end. . . . And the RKO showing the same afternoon—barely time enough out for lunch, and you know how exhibs like to stretch those gabbing lunch-fests, particularly on Monday. By Tuesday morning a lot of the exhibitors were wondering if they had been sold down the river to a new chain gang—up at the first crow of the rooster, view pictures all morning, grab a hamburger, view pictures all afternoon, watch the theater at night, grab another hamburger, this time with aspirin, set the alarm clock and start all over again. . . . The schedule won't even allow time to bargain for and to buy the pictures. . . . Much less sell them to the public.

MANY INTERESTING ANGLES TO THE NEW TRADE SHOWINGS

We don't know how they operated in other territories, but in Los Angeles the wise guys in distribution made assurance doubly sure that they would have Frigidaire audiences by limiting admittance on the exhibitors' tickets to a SINGLE person. . . . That meant, first, that the picture suffered that dismal, cold reaction any subject would receive in a practically empty theater. . . . Second, that the producers missed some possible help that might have come in audible reactions from exhibitors' wives, secretaries, or what-have-you, who at least can never be as clammy as any group of theater men with poker faces. . . . Odd thought: It is too early for *The Highlighter* to enter the discussion between the syndicate columnists and the distributors brought on by the fact that the nation's papers will no longer be able to send out reviews on pictures far in advance of their local showings. . . . The air is too full of words, and the words cloud the sense. . . . But an interesting thought hits us: What a

ZANUCK FRANK TALK HIGHLIGHTS 20TH's OPENING SESSION

Twentieth Century Fox's sales convention is holding its second day of sessions as we go to press.

The opening day was highlighted by a lengthy "cards-on-the-table" talk from Darryl Zanuck who won his audience with a frank discussion of production problems, of the production planning to develop new marquee material, and a man-to-man outline of the coming season's product.

To top it all off: Zanuck had a time-bomb announcement for the sales force in the news that Ginger Rogers would appear under the Twentieth trade-mark in an Ernst Lubitsch production.

relief the new procedure is going to be to newspaper readers in cities like Los Angeles, where it has been the practice for the editors and columnists to review—and frequently slam—the pictures as they saw them at premature previews, call their shots as they saw them, and then—when the picture broke at the local advertising theater—to have the picture reviewed in sugar-coated, and frequently honeyed, words by the second string reviewer who is supposed to have no conscience when there is an ad in the adjoining column. . . . It must have been quite puzzling to the lay goof who spends five cents for his favorite newspaper. . . . Just at the time the picture is available for him to see, and his coin is jingling, he reads that it is a corking piece of entertainment. But there is a faint itching in his memory which says that the same paper told him a month ago, in two or three columns, that it was not so hot. . . . What to do? . . . Save his money, go to the ball game. . . . What he should have done was cancel the subscription.

JOGGING HERE AND THERE ON THE STUDIO CIRCUIT

That Disney strike has got into the completely stalled state now that the support of the Machinist Union has stopped the processing of Disney negative and positive at the Technicolor plant. . . . That's the height of definition for that word the fellows in Washington love so much, bottleneck. . . . Trem Carr steps into complete activity with Monogram as executive director in charge of production. Howard Stubbins, our own West Coast franchise holder, goes on the board of directors. . . . John Stahl is moving along slowly to the starting gate. Now gathering material for a story on the life of Samuel Gompers, famed labor leader of the foundation days, as a Twentieth Century vehicle. . . . Norman Taurog, getting ready to start "Kathleen" in a week or so at MGM, is also being lined up for

the next Gable picture, due some time later when Clark has had a vacation after finishing "Honky Tonk." . . . Harry Sherman took a bunch of talent to Salt Lake City for the premiere of "The Parson of Panamint," which, incidentally, is a picture that has the Paramount selling force in this West Coast feeling very happy. . . . Glad to hear that Sam Taylor is scheduled by John Considine for early direction of an MGM picture. . . . Sam, who gave the screen the pictures that developed Harold Lloyd, and who was later top United Artists producer-director, has been away from the directorial wars too long. . . . Clarence Brown, just now sitting very pretty with "That Night in Bombay," will brave the Battle of Britain to make a Robert Donat special for MGM in England. . . . Being considerable of an aviator himself, maybe Brown could save passage money by ferrying one of those bombers across. . . . Clear from the shadow of his home studio to the English one.

PICKING UP THE NEWS ODDS AND ENDS

The Pipeline has a few reports. . . . One concerns Twentieth Fox's "Charlie's Aunt," with the infant prodigy Jack Benny in the lead. . . . Has been sneak previewed a few times in the polishing stage, and once the other night for the Twentieth panzers known as the sales force. . . . They say it is double distilled honey. . . . The Pipeline also humming very favorably on "Here Comes Mr. Jordan," which Everett Riskin has just completed for Columbia. . . . Al Hall directed. . . . First reports from New York indicate that even Warner Brothers did not know what a gold mine they have in "Sergeant York." . . . It is playing in the Astor, which is compelled to remove the wall paper to squeeze eleven hundred in, while up the street is Warners Strand, seating some twenty-five hundred, and in the highway between a dark house, the Rivoli, which would handle a couple of thousand ticket-buyers. . . . Woe is me, since the picture is apparently selling anybody who can buy elbow room. . . . We can't blame Warners, because who, in these days can decide what any picture might do. . . . But we can slip a bushel-basket of those orchids that nobody ever sees to Charlie Enfield's gang on the national exploitation. . . . And a bow to the nation-wide pleasure of newspaper writers in anxiety to say the best of words about that lovable character, Jesse Lasky. . . . The yarn that can be written about Jesse Lasky will be the one that tells much of the industry's history, and it must be mighty cheering to try the ups and the downs, and then learn what a great big good will asset you have built up by just being a regular.

The Box Office: "Moon Over Miami"

Hits High Despite Heat Spell

Of 12 New Releases In The Past Week,
Only 1 Ran Over 100%, 4 Came Through
Okay, And 7 Were Very Weak

FOX—3 New Releases

Darryl F. Zanuck's new Technicolor musical, "MOON OVER MIAMI," has been nationally released in the past ten days and considering the current heat wave it is holding its own very satisfactorily, averaging 118%, which in many instances means hold-over weeks.

Don Ameche and Betty Grable are co-starred and Robert Cummings, Carole Landis, Charlotte Greenwood head the featured cast.

Harry Joe Brown added to his fine credit list as associate producer to Mr. Zanuck.

Twentieth Century-Fox's second release this week is another of the so-called anti-Nazi pictures "MAN HUNT." This is really an outstanding picture and received excellent reviews but it is only running 90% at the box office, probably due to the fact that the public is hard to sell just now on this type of story.

Walter Pidgeon and Joan Bennett are co-starred and the featured cast is headed by George Sanders, John Carradine, Ronny McDowall and Heather Thatcher.

Kenneth Macgowan was associate producer to Mr. Zanuck and Fritz Lang directed. Dudley Nicholes wrote the screenplay from Geoffrey Household's best seller "Rogue Male."

Twentieth Century-Fox's third and last release this week is another Sol Wurtzel programmer, "FOR BEAUTY'S SAKE," 68%. Due to the lack of marquee names this one is not going so well. Marjorie Weaver and Ted North are co-featured and the supporting cast includes Ned Sparks, Joan Davis, and Tully Marshall. Sheppard Traube directed and Lucien Hubbard was the producer.

WARNERS—1 Release

Warners' only new release this week is "UNDERGROUND," 94%, and it is the second anti-Nazi picture of the last ten days. This one varies considerably from the other anti-Nazi pictures as the entire action of the story takes place within the

12 New Releases Not In The Last Issue

		%	Est.
Moon Over Miami	FOX	118	125
Underground	WAR	94	95
Big Store	MGM	92	85
Man Hunt	FOX	90	100
Adventure in Washington	COL	81	75
West Point Widow	PAR	74	70
Time Out for Rhythm	COL	71	75
For Beauty's Sake	FOX	68	70
Hit the Road	UNIV	67	65
I Was Prisoner Devil's Island	COL	67	70
Naval Academy	COL	65	65
Voice in the Night	COL	63	65

Germany of today. "UNDERGROUND" was backed up with a terrific exploitation campaign and opened up rather strongly but has now declined to 94% which is not bad considering there are no marquee names of importance.

Jeffrey Lynn is starred and the featured cast is headed by Philip Dorn, Kaaren Verne, Mona Maris and Martin Cosleck. Vincent Sherman directed and William Jacobs acted as associate producer to Brian Foy. Incidentally this is the biggest picture to come out of the Foy unit in several years.

MGM—Also 1 Release

MGM's new release is another Marx Bros. slap-stick comedy, "THE BIG STORE," which is going a little better than we estimated, averaging 92%. As the Marx Bros. and MGM have terminated their contract by mutual consent this may be their farewell screen appearance.

The featured cast is headed by Tony Martin, Virginia Grey, Margaret Dumont, Douglas Dumbrille and Marion Martin. Chuck Reisner directed for Producer Louis Sidney.

COLUMBIA—5 Releases

Columbia Studios are ending up the 1940-41 season with a batch of programmers before the new selling season. This week they have a special "ADVENTURE IN WASHINGTON" and four programmers.

"ADVENTURE IN WASHINGTON," originally sold to exhibitors as "SENATE PAGE BOYS," is by far their best release, although it is only averaging 81% to date.

Herbert Marshall and Virginia Bruce are co-starred and the featured cast is headed by Gene Reynolds, Samuel S. Hinds, Ralph Morgan and several very clever youngsters.

Al Green directed and Bill Pierce acted as associate producer to Charles R. Rogers.

Columbia's second release, "TIME OUT FOR RHYTHM," 71%, is a much better than average musical but it is not hitting at the box office as Rudy Vallee's name is too hard to sell. Ann Miller is Rudy's leading lady and the supporting cast includes

Rosemary Lane, Allan Jenkins and the Three Stooges. Sidney Salkow directed and Irving Starr produced.

Columbia's third release, "I WAS A PRISONER ON DEVILS ISLAND," 67%, is just fair programmer.

Sally Eilers and Donald Woods are co-featured with Eduardo Cianelli and Victor Killy. Lew Landers directed and Wallace McDonald produced.

Columbia's fourth release, "NAVAL ACADEMY," 65%, is a good example of how a star can come and go in this movie business. When the star, Freddie Bartholomew, was with MGM a few years ago his pictures were strong box office attractions with one of them, "Captains Courageous," having even been roadshowed. But today Freddie is at the awkward stage so "NAVAL ACADEMY" is not drawing very strongly but it will get by in the nabes, especially for a Fri-Sat. booking.

Erle Kenton directed for the Irving Briskin unit.

Columbia's fifth and last release "VOICE IN THE NIGHT," 63%, is still another anti-Nazi picture dealing with the Gestapo. This one was produced in England and is distributed here through Columbia.

Clive Brook is starred and is the only name that means anything. Anthony Asquith directed.

PARAMOUNT—1 Release

Paramount's new release is "WEST POINT WIDOW," 74%, one of the first programmers being made by the Sol Siegel unit. This one is good entertainment but will have to be doubled with a much stronger box office picture for name values.

Anne Shirley and Richard Carlson are co-featured. Colbert Clarke acted as associate producer to Mr. Siegel and Robert Siodmark directed.

UNIVERSAL—1 Release

Universal's release this week, "HIT THE ROAD," is just a so so programmer, 67%, which features the Dead End Kids and the Little Tough Guys and so will probably make a good Saturday matinee booking but of little value elsewhere unless on a bank night. Joe May directed and Kenneth Goldsmith produced.

6 FEATURES "GOING DOWN"

	Was Now
In The Navy	UNIV 151 148
Sunny	RKO 103 101
Las Vegas Nights	PAR 76 71
Keeping Company	MGM 71 67
Sleepers West	FOX 70 67
The Great Swindle	COL 70 67

6 FEATURES "GOING UP"

	Was Now
Caught in the Draft	PAR 154 158
She Knew All the Answers	COL 84 86
A Girl, a Guy and a Gob	RKO 80 83
They Dare Not Love	COL 77 79
Her First Beau	COL 70 72
Roar of the Press	MONO 67 69

'Tom, Dick and Harry' Has Many Good Moments

RKO

The Box Office Digest Estimates 115%

Producer Robert Sisk
 Director Garson Kanin
 Original screenplay Paul Jarrico
 Stars Ginger Rogers
 Featured: George Murphy, Alan Marshal, Burgess Meredith, Joe Cunningham, Jane Seymour, Leonore Lonergan, Vicki Lester, Phil Silvers, Betty Breckenridge.
 Photographer Merritt Gerstad
 Time 86 minutes

There is entertainment in "Tom, Dick and Harry." Quite a good share of it. Therefore it is regrettable to the reviewer to report that it isn't all wool and a yard wide as top picture production.

The trouble is with the story. What must have sounded like a very clever idea—having three very personable troupers vie for the favor of Ginger—doesn't jell for a straight, smooth-paced movie, and does a gelatin miss-out at the finish, for the simple reason that the chef doubled up on all the ingredients.

It should have been a "boy meets girl" story with Ginger Rogers and George Murphy pointed up to audience desires. The couple do a fine job. But plot trips them. Two other good actors, Alan Marshall and Burgess Meredith, must be taken care of. By the time they are all taken care of nobody is very much worried about what happens.

Even with its story weaknesses, so good are the production values assembled by Producer Robert Sisk, and the touches in direction of Garson Kanin, that the picture

Current Reviews

		We Est.
Tom, Dick and Harry	RKO	115
My Life With Caroline	RKO	105
Lady Be Good	MGM	100
Here's A Man	RKO	90
Parachute Battalion	RKO	80
Ellery Queen and the Perfect Crime	COL	75
Hurry, Charlie, Hurry	RKO	75
The Stars Look Down	MGM	70
Sweetheart of the Campus	COL	70
The Officer and the Lady	COL	65

will ride a safe trail at box offices even though it fails to add honey. No customer is going to argue over spending eighty-five minutes with Ginger Rogers and these boys.

The story is down to earth, with Ginger established as a telephone operator. Two boys want her; there is another boy whom she wants. So, there is a ring-around-rosie chase. Script and direction, and players, make it effervesce every now and then with pop-corn precision, but the darn thing never gets anywhere. They have been so darned busy being clever—that means symbolism, etc.—that the footage almost runs out before they can wrap up the story.

Supporting cast is excellent, with Joe Cunningham scoring for extra values as Ginger's father.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: Don't

oversell on the strength of the names. . . . Don't undersell, because it has its moments. Just don't over-buy. Previewed July 13th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "No brighter piece of satirical foolishness has emerged from Hollywood in many a day. "Tom, Dick and Harry" is an all-out invitation to have fun, and a Glendale audience at preview fell wholeheartedly into the spirit of the entertainment, greeting it with roars of appreciative laughter. It is a delightful attraction that cannot miss enjoying smashing grosses wherever it plays."

VARIETY: "What happens to a romantic telephone operator, pursued by two earnest young men, and her pursuit of a third not so earnest, is told with tricks and surprises in "Tom, Dick and Harry." The results are chock full of laughs, satire, and a few tender moments."

'Sweetheart of the Campus' Just So-So

COLUMBIA

The Box Office Digest Estimates 70%

Producer Jack Fier
 Director Edward Dmytryk
 Screenplay Robert D. Andrews,
 Edmund Hartmann
 Story Robert D. Andrews
 Featured: Ruby Keeler, Ozzie Nelson, Harriett Hilliard, Gordon Oliver, Don Beddoe, Charles Judels, Kathleen Howard, Byron Foulger, George Lessey, Frank Gaby, Leo Watson, the Four Spirits of Rhythm.
 Photographer Franz F. Planer
 Time 67 minutes

Omigosh—the season of college pictures is almost upon us. Soon there will be nothing but draft army pictures and college pictures for the season when the Autumn leaves fall. So some wise fellow will come

along with "just a picture" and clean up on the novelty.

Columbia leads the season's collegiate parade with "Sweetheart of the Campus." It is a stumbling start, rating mild attention as filler fodder if you run triple bills.

The plot is something of a conglomeration of all the last decade's pictures that try to wed college to music. In this case it is a battle between orchestra leader Ozzie Nelson and Ruby Keeler on one side, and a heavy-heavy on the collegiate side who tries to stymie their night club.

You certainly must remember the variations of the theme. Wasn't one of the first a Paramount offering in which Jack Oakie took over a girl's school?

Well, it runs along that way, giving a moment or two to the story now and then,

while pounding hard on the musical numbers and the Ozzie Nelson, Ruby Keeler and Harriett Hilliard values. The contributions of this trio, as well as those of a capable supporting cast, are well worth while, but as they say at Santa Anita, the director and the cast never seemed to get "untracked."

Exhibitor's Suggestion: If it is one of those "ships that pass in the night" you won't miss it, though the top names may get you some pin money in college towns. Previewed June 23rd.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "Trying to make a college musical on a slim budget presented too many problems for the producers of "Sweetheart of the Campus."

VARIETY: "'Sweetheart of the Campus' qualifies as a tuneful little musical amply able to take care of its half of a double bill."

'Lady Be Good' Could Have Been Better

MGM

The Box Office Digest Estimates 100%

Producer Arthur Freed
Director Norman Z. McLeod
Screenplay Jack McGowan, Kay Van Riper:
 John McLain
Original Jack McGowan
Stars Eleanor Powell, Ann
 Sothern, Robert Young
Featured: Lionel Barrymore, John Carroll, Red
 Skelton, Virginia O'Brien, Tom Conway,
 Dan Dailey, Jr., Reginald Owen, Rose
 Hobart, Phil Silvers, The Berry Brothers,
 Connie Russell.
Photographers George Folsey, Oliver T. Marsh
Time 110 minutes

It is pretty hard to figure "Lady Be Good." The top credit line goes to an established MGM star, Eleanor Powell, and then Eleanor Powell's role in the picture becomes an intermittent secondary role to that of Ann Sothern. The picture is a musical, yet the producers set themselves the twice-high handicap of telling a story in retrospect, which keeps it from ever getting any of the pace or glitter of a musical.

It looks as though they tried the hard way to be different. They have certainly been different.

Arthur Freed has an enviable record as a producer of musicals at MGM—he has never missed. Norman McLeod has too long a picture record of successes for our space. But someone—and maybe some of the blame is theirs—missed out when they decided that there was a way to capitalize on the haunting popularity of the song "Lady Be Good," and on the Leo trademark,

while giving the customers something that is neither here nor there.

The picture opens on a scene in the Court of Domestic Relations and gives a reel of dullness until it goes into a flashback sequence. Do you think that is a glamorous way to start a musical? Shucks, you haven't heard anything yet. There are still a couple or more of flashbacks before the 110 minutes are used up. And this is a musical.

In between the flashbacks Norman McLeod struggles as only his experience could dictate to keep spotty individual scenes holding a flutter of life; in between, someone remembers that it is a musical, so you get spots of songs as they are being written, the same songs as presented on air and in night clubs, the same songs—oh, it goes on and on with every song.

Up to the sixth reel or so Eleanor Powell has been doing an adequate speaking extra job. About that point—mebbe even later—she does a dance number with a cute trick dog. But without production value—it is only a rehearsal in her own apartment. We forget the star then for another reel when she is wound in the threads of the finale—and it is not a number she will ever boast about.

No fault can be found with the cast. They have all delivered the characterizations—or the lack of character—that the script assigned them to deliver. Ann Sothern gets the star footage, playing a role that is supposed to show her a smart gal, but a sucker for love. Robert Young is a combination of one messy heel and a dumbell in forty

languages. Eleanor Powell is the friend of this couple that likes to get divorced and remarried with the routine of a merry-go-round. Lionel Barrymore is Judge Flashback. John Carroll comes up for air whenever given a chance. Red Skelton, whom MGM is supposed to be grooming for better things, is wasted. Phil Silvers has three lines.

Best audience values are in the vaudeville support by specialties that will probably never be seen on the screen again. One of these is a really ace-high negro trio, The Berry Brothers, who brought the exhibitors viewing this trade showing out of the lethargy for the first time.

The songs are good—both new and old—but hurt by a technique that strives too hard to plug every number. You get tired of them between flashbacks.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: Coming from MGM you know it is not an absolutely poor show; but don't let them top-bracket it. Previewed July 15th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "Yes, there is entertainment and then some in "Lady Be Good," and the happy ending to its charming story will be written at the box office."

VARIETY: "Picture's romantic and melodic elements, its dancing, specialties and picturesque presentation fits into the cycle of lighter diversion which seems to have the current public preference. On the technical side it sets a high standard. It makes a lavish showing, without being burdened by too hefty outlay, so that the b. o. account should be highly satisfactory in the top situations and well down through the secondaries."

'My Life With Caroline' None Too Hot

RKO

The Box Office Digest Estimates 105%

Producer-director **Lewis Milestone**
Screenplay **John Van Druten, Arnold Belgard**
Original play **Louis Verneuil, Georges Berr**
Stars **Rona'd Colman**
Featured: Anna Lee, Charles Winninger, Reginald Gardiner. Gilbert Roland. Katherine Leslie, Hugh' O'Connell, Murray Alper, Matt Moore.
Photographer **Victor Milner**
Time **81 minutes**

"Life With Caroline" is so darned clever that it trips itself up in its own cleverness. Lewis Milestone gives it everything in the way of directional skill, the players try their darndest, but when all is said and done up to the fade-out, the only words left to say are, "So what?"

Average audiences will sit on the edge of their seats for the first reel or so, as they breathe in the ingratiating Ronald Colman personality, but before three reels

more have passed in the night those same average audiences will be saying "what's it about?"

One fellow viewer told me, "It might be a woman's picture." That's about the last refuge of the Alibi Squad. We have yet to see an American theater advertising a picture and marqueeing: "FOR WOMEN."

To be more gentle, it must be said that the picture never jells. The skilled Milestone scene treatment is too clever for the material. Ronald Colman is the picture's sparkplug, but even a sparkplug needs gas somewhere in the tank. Anna Lee, who clicked in a British production, "King Solomon's Mines," suffers from maltreatment at the hands of the scripters. You never quite know just what she is, either cute little dumbell tootsie or hard boiled evil. She probably never knew herself.

Charlie Winner wanders around trying to help the proceedings, but the script never helps him. Gilbert Roland in a brief appearance raises a spark—but they ex-

tinguish it quickly. Hugh O'Connell gets moments that should mark him for bigger opportunities.

The story? Well, it is one of those things about the wife who is always straying in fresher pastures, and Colman is her husband. Sounds foolish right away, as a premise, doesn't it? Well, why go on to tell you more of the rigamarole by which it lasts for eighty-one minutes.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: Somewhere along the line they missed connections. . . . They started out with Colman to fit any marquee, but they haven't got anywhere yet. Previewed July 14th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "In the series of domestic comedies to which Hollywood has long been addicted, "My Life With Caroline" stacks up with the more amusing."

VARIETY: "My Life With Caroline" stacks up as first hand material in the de luxe houses because of lavish production dress and occasional humor. Otherwise the going is likely to be hard."

Welcome! 20th CENTURY

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Herman Place
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Lew Schreiber

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William J. Clark
Jack Sichelman
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C. A. Hill
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Jack Bloom
Roger Ferri
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E. McEvoy
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E. W. Wingart
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M. Kinzler
Eddie Solomon
Gabe Yorke
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J. Shea

Ward Farrar
Spence Pierce
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Clifford Gill

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Jack Darrock
Russell Muth
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E. Hollander

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C. Mayer

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Harvey Day
William Weiss

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George Bowser
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T. Sargent
Spencer Love
Stan Meyer
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F. W. Pride
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J. P. O'Loghlin—Toronto

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V. M. Skorey—Calgary
E. English—Montreal
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ENDING THE 1940-41 SEASON!

"MOON OVER MIAMI"

IN TECHNICOLOR

featuring **DON AMECHE • BETTY GRABLE • ROBERT CUMMINGS**

and Charlotte Greenwood • Jack Haley • Carole Landis • Cobina Wright, Jr

Directed by **WALTER LANG** • Produced by **HARRY JOE BROWN**

Screen Play by Vincent Lawrence and Brown Holmes • Adaptation by George Seaton and Lynn Starling • From a Play by Stephen Powys
Lyrics and Music by Leo Robin and Ralph Rainger • Dances Staged by Hermes Pan



20th CENTURY FOX

-FOX CONVENTIONEERS!

LOS ANGELES, July 16th to 19th

SALESMEN

CHICAGO
E. P. Grohe
H. Loeb
H. Goodamote
M. Simon
A. M. VanDyke
DETROIT
A. D. Knapp
E. A. Westcott
Roy Carrow
Floyd Keillor
MINNEAPOLIS
Earl Lorentz
J. S. Cohan
W. G. Mussman
Louis Cohen
N. F. Hall
W. Branton
INDIANAPOLIS
J. R. Neger, Sales Mgr.
H. L. Hancock
T. McCleaster
MILWAUKEE
M. Horwitz
G. Edgerton
C. Michel
DES MOINES
L. C. Paulson
H. Gottlieb
H. Lyons
OMAHA
G. F. Halloran
H. P. Ironfield
Harry Levy
CALGARY
F. L. Scott
MONTREAL
J. F. Pearson
TORONTO
W. J. Reid
L. Lester
Elroy O'Loughlin
VANCOUVER
R. A. Cringan
WINNIPEG
Chas. Krupp

BOSTON
H. S. Alexander, Sales Mgr.
J. A. Feloney
J. M. Connolly
H. Gold
M. Simons
PHILADELPHIA
A. Davis, Sales Mgr.
W. G. Humphries
B. R. Tolmas
J. H. Smith
PITTSBURGH
C. C. Kellenberg
E. S. Thorpe
A. Interrante
George Moore
CLEVELAND
T. Scheinberg
E. R. Bergman
S. N. Lichter
ALBANY
F. G. Sliter
Ben Dare
NEW HAVEN
E. Wright
WASHINGTON
S. Diamond
F. B. Klein
J. A. Murphy
C. G. Norris
NEW YORK
J. J. Lee, Sales Mgr.
M. Sanders
M. Kurtz
J. St. Clair
Wm. Schutzer
Abe Blumstein
S. Florin
BUFFALO
W. C. Rowell
G. E. Dickman
CINCINNATI
R. O. Laws, Sales Mgr.
E. A. Burkart
J. A. Needham
L. J. Bugie
E. C. Naegel

SALESMEN

KANSAS CITY
W. J. Kubitzki, Sales Mgr.
J. F. Woodward
C. Knickerbocker
H. Kinser
CHARLOTTE
J. E. Holston
G. E. Ebersole
J. O. Mock
ST. LOUIS
J. A. Feld
G. H. Ware
L. J. Williams
A. Eskin
ATLANTA
R. G. McClure, Sales Mgr.
M. Mitchell
R. H. Fairchild
F. R. Dodson
OKLAHOMA CITY
M. W. Osborne
G. L. James
DENVER
H. Rennie
G. W. Tawson
DALLAS
T. P. Tidwell
W. S. Miller
G. E. Gribble
N. B. Houston
T. Hendrix
MEMPHIS
N. Wyse
T. I. Baskin
NEW ORLEANS
H. P. Shallcross
G. R. Pabst
PORTLAND
C. L. Robinett
LOS ANGELES
W. T. Wall
B. F. Robison
SALT LAKE
C. A. Blasius, Asst. Mgr.
J. L. Tidwell
V. J. Dugan
C. J. Hallstrom

SAN FRANCISCO
A. Laurice
J. M. Erickson
F. C. Bernard
J. W. Flanagan
SEATTLE
A. B. Holt
J. W. Brooks



BOOKERS
A. L. Monnette
L. Sanshie
P. Lundquist
J. Ricketts
M. Kahn
E. Jacobs
J. Weisfeldt
John Casey
S. Berg
F. J. Kelly
J. B. Hanna
F. J. Hunt
D. Houlihan
S. Germain
J. M. Cohan
Mrs. S. Young
G. Blenderman
G. Sussman
J. Neff
M. A. Tanner
C. T. Hardin
Miss F. Patke
R. H. Ford
G. K. Friedel
C. A. Larson
V. J. Gregg
M. Sheridan
G. J. Broggi
H. L. Fox
M. Sudmin
P. M. Smoot
J. W. Flanagan
Miss R. Teller
R. H. Osborne



BEGINNING THE 1941-42 SEASON!

JACK BENNY

in Brandon Thomas' Immortal Comedy

"CHARLEY'S AUNT"

with **KAY FRANCIS** • James Ellison • Anne Baxter • Edmund Gwenn
Reginald Owen • Laird Cregar • Arleen Whelan
Richard Haydn • Ernest Cossart • Morton Lowry

Directed by **ARCHIE MAYO** • Produced by **WILLIAM PERLBERG**

Screen Play by George Seaton
Based on the Play by Brandon Thomas

WORLD PREMIERE
Grauman's **CHINESE** Theatre
Thursday Evening
July 31st



RKO's 'Here's A Man' Too Good For the Title

RKO

The Box Office Digest Estimates 90%

Producer-director William Dieterle
 Associate producer Charles L. Glett
 Screenplay Dan Tothoroh,
 Stephen Vincent Benet
 Original Stephen Vincent Benet
 Featured: Edward Arnold, Walter Huston, Anne
 Shirley, James Craig, Jane Darwell, Simone
 Simon, Gene Lockhart, John Qualen, H. B.
 Warner, Frank Conlan, Lindy Wade, George
 Cleveland.
 Photographer Joseph August
 Time 106 minutes

William Dieterle has delivered, as producer and director of this picture, one of the industry's outstanding contributions to dramatic art and to the patriotism that is the real America.

It is just a shame that an industry with such a powerful piece of merchandise to offer is forced to wonder how it can be sold.

Originally called by the name of its Saturday Evening Post parent, "The Devil and Daniel Webster," it is now "Here's a Man." The first title must have worried the powers that sell because it contained an idea; the present title will not draw flies if you squeeze molasses drips all over the marquee.

And it is all to be regretted. That any industry should have such problems. Because this is a great picture.

Dieterle approached his subject with the combined sincerity of a craftsman and a zealot. A craftsman in his execution of the job; a zealot in his clearly evident 100% love for America and a desire to translate that love into entertainment.

It's a corking picture. When you see it you will realize what we are trying to say about its approach to the fundamentals of life. You will also realize that it must be

sold. Let's hope the company gives a little help with a better title.

That is enough of the philosophic approach. Let's talk about it now as a long strip of celluloid. It tells the story of the American Republic in the post-Revolution days, as seen through characters in New Hampshire. Daniel Webster is the big figure, a potential president in most expectations. The problem is that of farmers being ground to penury through the exactions of loan sharks.

Then it goes to fantasy. Our hero, James Craig, driven to the wall, is approached by the incarnated Satan, Walter Huston, and promised all the things that money can buy—in exchange for a trifle, his soul. He makes the deal with a date set for delivery of that bauble, his soul.

Money brings many things, but it does not seem to bring happiness. However, satanic Huston reminds his client that he only promised "all the things that money can buy," and that there was no mention of happiness in the duly executed contract.

It all works to a wierd scene when Daniel Webster (Edward Arnold) puts forth his all at a jury trial for the fate of Craig's soul. The jurors include Benedict Arnold, Captain Kidd, Simon Gurtry, and their ilk. Webster wins his case—and a great scene for Arnold it is—and just to keep you from worrying about the intelligent aspects of the subject we will report that it all ends happily.

It is difficult to know where to start talking about the cast, so well has it been chosen, and so superbly have all responded to Dieterle's direction. Edward Arnold took on the job on which the entire picture had to hang, and came through with a great performance in its rise from simple humanities to the oratorics of the climax.

And no one will ever disagree with you if you tell them that this is the first time the screen has discovered Walter Huston. Anything he has done on film in the past fades before this characterization.

But we shouldn't forget the younger players who must carry the larger portion of the interest that is sometimes called "romantic." This newcomer from the stage, James Craig, is definitely a name to put in your book. Without being a stereotype of any of our present top leading men he has facets which remind of all. Get aboard his band wagon. Anne Shirley registers a call for bigger opportunities, because in personality and trouping, she wraps this part up.

Simone Simon, as "a gal from over the hill," and that should really be spelled "hell," delivers a charming performance. Jane Darwell clicks. Especially because of a note of restraint that accentuates her part.

Support seems to have been hand-picked. Every time you turn your eyes you see the face of a top character player.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: Top entertainment, but it needs selling. Let's hope they get a better title and start all over again. They've got something. Previewed July 15th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: Without doubt, this provocative feature deserves place on any list of the year's ten extraordinary pictures. Whether it also lands among the ten best grossers, depends entirely upon how competently exhibitors create fresh exploitation approaches."

VARIETY: "This is an odd fantasy which will have to rely largely upon its novelty to bid for program patronage. Off the beaten track, and essentially a morality play of the Faustian order, the picture's reception will depend a good deal upon the localities where played and the benefits of individual showmanship it may get."

Ellery Queen's 'Perfect Crime' Tops Series

COLUMBIA

The Box Office Digest Estimates 75%

Producer Larry Darmour
 Director James Hogan
 Original story Ellery Queen
 Screenplay Eric Taylor
 Stars Ralph Bellamy, Margaret Lindsay
 Featured: Charley Grapewin, Spring Byington,
 H. B. Warner, James Burke, Douglas Dum-
 brille, John Beal, Linda Hayes, Sidney
 Blackmer, Walter Kingsford, Honorable Wu,
 Charles Lane.
 Photographer James Brown
 Time 68 minutes

Favorable reception of previous Ellery Queen mysteries has apparently inspired Larry Darmour to go all-out in the matter of casting, and "The Perfect Crime" presents an outstanding grouping of players for this type of entertainment.

The results of this effort prove well worth while, for the chapter is the best of the group and definite indication that the series is now riding along a smooth roadway.

Director James Hogan, whose middle name is Consistency, gets full response from his fine cast, the whodunit angles of the story are suspenseful and well paced, the picture's mounting is on the class side.

There is little point in telling the plot of mystery yarns, so we will be content with giving you the identity of the victim and then assure you that there is a plentitude of characters in the action who rate as first class suspects. The victim is Douglas Dumbrille, shady promoter; the suspects an assorted lot all of whom have very fine motives for seeking a killer's vengeance.

The same top quartette continues in the

roles which tie the series together—Ralph Bellamy, Margaret Lindsay, Charles Grapewin, James Burke. The strong support which enacts the mystery on which they are working includes Spring Byington, H. B. Warner, Douglas Dumbrille, John Beal, Linda Hayes, Sidney Blackmer.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: Well made mystery entertainment. Previewed July 7th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "This third of the Ellery Queen features has considerably more body than either of its predecessors and gives hopeful indication that the series is beginning to hit its stride."

VARIETY: "This is a rather involved film whodunit that will have to ride along on the popularity of the 'Ellery Queen' novels and radio programs. Third in Larry Darmour's series for Columbia, picture slips, below the standard of the second."

'Parachute Battalion' Timely Entertainment

RKO-RADIO

The Box Office Digest Estimates 80%

Producer Howard Benedict
 Director Leslie Goodwins
 Original screenplay John Twist,
 Major Hugh Fite
 Stars Robert Preston, Nancy Kelly
 Featured: Edmond O'Brien, Harry Carey, Buddy Ebsen, Paul Kelly, Richard Cromwell, Robert Barrat, Edward Fielding, Erville Alderson, Selmer Jackson, Grant Withers, Jack Briggs, Walter Sande, Kathryn Sheldon, Lee Bonnell, Robert Smith, Gayne Whitman, Douglas Evans, Eddie Dunn.
 Photographer J. Roy Hunt
 Time 74 minutes

Here is a picture that a lot of exhibitors will welcome with open arms. Despite its fine title, it is not an epic, nor does it make any pretensions to such glamour. It is just

a darn good show on a headline theme that will send 'em home—young and old—happy that the movies are again giving entertainment and not always psychological studies.

The picture has novelty in the present welter of synthetic service pictures in that its entertainment elements are backgrounded by introduction to factual Army work. That background is Uncle Sam, and his nephews who are so foolish as to drop from the sky under silken parachutes.

Producer Howard Benedict has got all the timely and audience selling values out of these fact elements, but also has gone on with the safe hand of Scriptor John Twist—sharing credit with Major Hugh Fite—to dress it as entertainment.

The cast is excellent, with Robert Preston heading a neat gathering of troupers. Just look at the credit list above.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: Not an A, but better for a timely spot booking these days, and more interesting than most B's. So make your deal, set your dates, and sell your show. Previewed July 14th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "A very timely show, it is a wonder that RKO is not sending it out immediately, instead of withholding release until September."

VARIETY: "This one is limited to masculine draw and accordingly rates in the lower percentage or flat rental brackets. Aside from limitations of theme the film has high production values which are noteworthy in good casting, excellent backgrounds, Roy Webb's exciting musical score, and Director Leslie Goodwins' deft piloting."

'Hurry, Charlie, Hurry' a Leon Errol 'B' Romp

RKO

The Box Office Digest Estimates 72%

Producer Howard Benedict
 Director Charles E. Roberts
 Screenplay Paul Gerard Smith
 Original Luke Short
 Stars Leon Errol
 Featured: Mildred Coles, Kenneth Howell, Cecil Cunningham, George Watts, Eddie Conrad, Noble Johnson, Douglas Walton, Renee Haal, Georgia Caine, Lalo Encinas.
 Photographer Nicholas Musuraca
 Time 65 minutes

They reach here, there and everywhere for laughs in "Hurry, Charlie, Hurry," but the important part of it is that they get enough of them to satisfy the average audience. Not exactly a "class" offering, it can be considered rather a relaxing night with a group of good old-fashioned belly

laugh two reelers, strung together with occasional spots showing the seams.

Luke Short's original, and Paul Gerard Smith's script set out unabashedly to give Leon Errol everything zanie or screwy to do that they could concoct. That being the case it is needless to remark that Errol can do those things. He does, and how, working with the perspiring energy of his old stage days punching every line, mannerism or gag across the footlights.

The story follows straight farce lines getting hubby Leon Errol, with austere Cecil Cunningham as his wife, embroiled in about every embarrassing moment you can think of, from a routine where three faithful Indian pals follow him into his mansion and squat permanently on to a climax which has three vice-presidents of the United States—two phonies, one real—alternating for laughs and trouble.

Director Charles Roberts has done a good job with entertainment factors that could probably not avoid being a bit spotty, or rather on the vaudeville side.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: Just low-down fun, in the budget class, pretty safe fun for mass audiences. Previewed July 7th.

WHAT THE OTHER FELLOWS SAID:

REPORTER: "'Hurry, Charlie, Hurry' is 65 minutes of two-reel comedy routines, very funny when it is funny at all and pleasant enough to watch while the comics are setting the stage for the next gag. Sent out to a program market that can stand a good laugh, this is slated to do right for itself in support bookings."

VARIETY: "The characteristic Leon Errol comicalities, broad and direct, get a strenuous workout in this offering for those customers who like to laugh the easy way."

. . . BRIEF REVIEWS . . .

"THE STARS LOOK DOWN"

GRAFTON FILM-MGM

The Box Office Digest Estimates 70%

Producer I. Goldsmith
 Director Carol Reed
 Screenplay J. B. Williams
 Original novel A. J. Cronin
 Stars Michael Redgrave, Margaret Lockwood, Emyln Williams
 Photographer Mutz Greenbaum, Henry Harris
 Time 97 minutes

This British made picture, to be released through MGM, was directed by Carol Reed who recently is getting quite a bit of American attention because of "Night Train," but it is evidently not his latest effort and probably has accumulated a bit of shelf dust before the decision to release it to American audiences. . . . Appeal will be limited here. . . . The cast is all-British,

the theme a heavy one, the problems of downtrodden workers in Welsh coal mines. Development is not as smooth as Reed's latest work, with the feeling unavoidable that there has been considerable chopping and patching in the cutting room.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: You can pass it by without missing anything of entertainment or selling value. Previewed July 6th.

"THE OFFICER AND THE LADY"

COLUMBIA

Producer Leon Barsha
 Director Sam White
 Screenplay Lambert Hillyer, Joseph Hoffman
 Original Lambert Hillyer
 Stars Rochelle Hudson, Bruce Bennett, Roger Pryor

A low bracket Columbia offering that has nothing in names to sell, and only a fair cops-robbers-chase yarn to give the patrons of the Saturday matinees. . . . Direction by Sam White keeps it from being on the "poor" side of the ledger, but nothing in story lifts it to the other side. It's on the fence. . . . You know the plot—the cop and the school teacher, the latter fearful that his reckless courage is going to bring the same sort of tragedy that ruined the life of her father, also a cop.

Exhibitor's Booking Suggestion: You know where these fit in for you better than we can tell you. Previewed July 8th.

This Year
THE EXHIBITOR
Buys!

IT WAS THE CUSTOM THAT HE WAS JUST SOLD!
BUT THE GOVERNMENT HAS SAID THAT HE
DOESN'T HAVE TO BUY HIS BANANAS IN A BUNCH
HEREAFTER, BUT CAN PICK FIVE OF THE PIECES
OF FRUIT THAT HE DESIRES.

LAST WEEK'S SHOWINGS PROVED THAT THE
EXHIBITOR HASN'T THE TIME TO SEE ALL THE
PICTURES—NOT EVEN THE CHOICE LEADERS.

SO IT SUMS UP:

THAT THE EXHIBITOR IS MORE THAN EVER
INTERESTED IN THE STRAIGHT - FROM - THE -
SHOULDER REVIEWS, AND THE BOX OFFICE
FACTS THAT HE GETS FROM ONLY ONE SOURCE—

BOX OFFICE DIGEST

This is the DIGEST'S Year!

What Happened THIS WEEK?

The Week's Floperoo:

The industry's first consent decree trade showings for those exhibitors Uncle Sam felt were avidly hungry for the privilege of seeing the pictures before they bought them. . . . The reaction to their apathy: Exhibitors will continue to rely on the TRADE PAPER REVIEWS that they believe competent and honest; will continue to give eager ears to knowledge of how the pictures are received at their super-super-first-run-key-city openings. . . . The week's answer—pardon our modesty—this is a Box Office Digest year. . . . The subscription department has already given us that report.

The Week's Puzzle:

This is strictly an Editor's worry. . . . He took some friends to the Hawaiian Theater last week to see "Paper Bullets" because his reviewer had gushed so much over what Director Phil Rosen had done with a picture that cost somewhere between \$12,000 and \$15,000. . . . He left the theater wishing that a number of our touted producers had taken time out to see the audience reaction. . . . Therefore the puzzled frown: Why doesn't some major grab Phil Rosen, give him a real story, and cash in. . . . He is not a Johnny-Come-Lately, just out of the cutting room or the coach train from New York; he has made epics, and inbetweeners, and everything. . . . But he has one bad habit: He makes them at the money the producer wants to spend.

The Week's Mystery:

Trying to figure out just what MGM has in mind for the future of Eleanor Powell. . . . After seeing "Lady Be Good." . . . She is cheated around in that picture with as few opportunities as would be given to an unproven "discovery" from a downtown dance hall. . . . We have always been told that there is a meaning in all things, so there must be something behind this. Either Eleanor Powell is a star, and stars need production backing more than neophytes, or she is just a dancing specialty. . . . Has Leo the Lion made a decision in the matter? If so, why not let the exhibitor in on the secret, instead of selling him the picture on the strength of the Eleanor Powell first-credit listing?

The Week's Dismal Thought:

What the current "summer-filler" bills being shown in so many sections of the country are going to do in September when we try to get the sap customers back in the motion picture houses. . . . We have never before seen the motion picture industry flop to earth and roll over like a scared puppy as it has this Summer. They are not even using the proven pre-release August showings that used to help two ways: By bringing in needed early coin to the home office, and by setting the ball rolling with favorable word-of-mouth for the September break. . . . They just quit. . . . Reissues, rebookings, refugees from the shelf—and they expect a public to rush back after Labor Day and swamp box offices.



THE BATTING AVERAGES

1941

Producers and Associate Producers

	Pictures	%
Joseph Mankiewicz	1	178
Buddy DeSylva	1	158
David Hempstead	1	143
Paul Jones	2	139
Hunt Stromberg	1	138
Pan Berman	2	137
John Considine	1	135
Robert Kane	1	133
Irving Asher	1	132
Alex Gottlieb	2	128
Bruce Manning	1	126
Harry Joe Brown	2	123
William Perlberg	1	125
William Cagney	1	124
Arthur Hornblow, Jr.	1	123
Victor Saville	1	119
Frank Ross	1	110
Fred Kohlmar	2	109
Joseph Pasternak	2	104

Producer-Directors

	Pictures	%
Frank Capra	1	137
Alexander Korda	1	128
George Stevens	1	127
E. H. Griffith	2	113
Clarence Brown	1	107
Herbert Wilcox	1	101

Actresses

	Pictures	%
Ginger Rogers	1	143
Barbara Stanwyck	2	129
Vivien Leigh	1	128
Myrna Loy	1	127
Irene Dunne	1	127
Rosalind Russell	1	125
Olivia de Havilland	1	124
Joan Crawford	1	119
Bette Davis	1	118
Deanna Durbin	1	118
Carole Lombard	1	118
Alice Faye	2	115
Madeleine Carroll	2	113
Ida Lupino	1	110
Jean Arthur	1	110
Hedy Lamarr	1	107
Margaret Sullavan	2	106
Anna Neagle	1	101

Directors

	Pictures	%
David Butler	1	158
Victor Schertzinger	1	157
Robert Leonard	1	146
George Cukor	2	149
Clarence Brown	1	138
Norman Taurog	1	135
George B. Seitz	1	133
Rouben Mamoulian	1	133
David Miller	1	132
John Ford	1	130
Irving Cummings	1	127
Sam Wood	1	127
Jack Conway	1	127
Robert Stevenson	1	126
Al Hall	1	125
Mitchell Leisen	1	123
Preston Sturges	1	120
Edmund Goulding	1	118
William Seiter	1	118
Walter Lang	1	118
Alfred Hitchcock	1	118
Raoul Walsh	2	117
Frank Borzage	1	115
Michal Curtiz	1	112
Fritz Lang	2	109
Arthur Lubin	3	109
Archie Mayo	1	102

Actors

	Pictures	%
Bob Hope	2	158
Bing Crosby	1	157
Cary Grant	2	153
Clark Gable	1	138
Gary Cooper	1	137
Spencer Tracy	1	135
Mickey Rooney	2	134
Tyrone Power	1	133
James Stewart	4	132
Abbott and Costello	2	128
Laurence Olivier	1	128
Randolph Scott	1	127
William Powell	1	127
Charles Boyer	1	126
Robert Taylor	2	124
James Cagney	1	124
Don Ameche	2	123
Ray Millard	1	123
Henry Fonda	1	120
Fred MacMurray	2	113
Edward G. Robinson	1	112
Melvyn Douglas	3	108
Robert Young	2	100

All Major Features Released in 1941

A

OVER \$500,000

Philadelphia Story	MGM	178
Caught in the Draft	PAR	158
Road to Zanzibar	PAR	157
Ziegfeld Girl	MGM	146
Kitty Foyle	RKO	143
They Met in Bombay	MGM	138
Meet John Doe	WAR	137
Men of Boys Town	MGM	135
Blood and Sand	FOX	133
Billy the Kid	MGM	132
Tobacco Road	FOX	130
That Hamilton Woman	UA	128
Western Union	FOX	127
Penny Serenade	COL	127
That Night in Rio	FOX	127
Flight Command	MGM	127
Love Crazy	MGM	127
Back Street	UNIV	126
Strawberry Blonde	WAR	124
I Wanted Wings	PAR	123
Lady Eve	PAR	120
Virginia	PAR	120
Woman's Face	MGM	119
Moon Over Miami	FOX	118
The Great Lie	WAR	118
Nice Girl?	UNIV	118
Mr. and Mrs. Smith	RKO	118
The Sea Wolf	WAR	112
The Devil and Miss Jones	RKO	110
Come Live With Me	MGM	107
Great American Broadcast	FOX	107
One Night in Lisbon	PAR	106
Sunny	RKO	101
Pot O' Gold	UA	96
Hudson's Bay	FOX	94
Son of Monte Cristo	UA	87
Lady From Cheyenne	UNIV	86
So Ends Our Night	UA	85
Flame of New Orleans	UNIV	82
That Uncertain Feeling	UA	81
Victory	PAR	78

B

FROM \$200,000 TO \$500,000

In the Navy	UNIV	148
Andy Hardy's Private Secretary	MGM	133
This Thing Called Love	COL	125
High Sierra	WAR	110

Underground	WAR	94
The Big Store	MGM	92
Man Hunt	FOX	90
Cheers For Miss Bishop	UA	88
Footsteps In The Dark	WAR	86
Bad Man	MGM	86
Million Dollar Baby	WAR	86
She Knew All the Answers	COL	86
Topper Returns	UA	84
A Girl, a Guy and a Gob	RKO	83
Wagons Roll at Night	WAR	83
Maisie Was a Lady	MM	83
Adam Had Four Sons	COL	82
Adventure in Washington	COL	81
Mad Doctor	PAR	81
Affectionately Yours	WAR	80
They Dare Not Love	COL	79
Broadway Limited	UA	78
Lady From Louisiana	REP	78
Tall, Dark and Handsome	FOX	78
Texas Rangers Ride Again	PAR	78
Invisible Woman	UNIV	78
Three on a Honeymoon	WAR	77
Round Up	PAR	77
People vs. Dr. Kildare	MGM	76
Model Wife	UNIV	76
Sis Hopkins	REP	76
Reaching For the Sun	PAR	75
Angels With Broken Wings	REP	75
Out of the Fog	WAR	74
You're the One	PAR	73
Romance of the Rio Grande	FOX	73
Blonde Inspiration	MGM	73
Washington Melodrama	MGM	72
Shining Victory	WAR	72
Life with Henry	PAR	72
Golden Hoofs	FOX	72
Too Many Blondes	UNIV	71
Las Vegas Nights	PAR	71
Road Show	UA	71
Man Who Lost Himself	UNIV	70
Black Cat	UNIV	70
Rage in Heaven	MGM	70
Flight From Destiny	WAR	70
The Penalty	MGM	69
Wild Man of Borneo	MGM	68
They Met in Argentina	RKO	67
Keeping Company	MGM	67
Murder Among Friends	FOX	66
Hard Boiled Canary	PAR	63

C

FROM \$100,000 TO \$200,000

Buck Privates	UNIV	108
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Six Lessons from Madame LaZonga	UNIV	80
Ellery Queen Penthouse Mystery	COL	78
West Point Widow	PAR	74
Blondie Goes Latin	COL	74
Phantom Submarine	RKO	72
Play Girl	MGM	72
Trial of Mary Dugan	UNIV	72
A Dangerous Game	FOX	72
Free and Easy	MGM	72
Her First Beau	COL	72
Time Out for Rhythm	COL	71
Ride on Vaquero	FOX	71
Double Date	UNIV	71
Face Behind the Mask	COL	71
Ride, Kelly, Ride	FOX	71
Boston Blackie	COL	71
Scotland Yard	FOX	70
Ellery Queen Penthouse Mystery	COL	70
Dead Men Tell	FOX	70
Devil Commands	COL	70
Great Mr. Nobody	WAR	70
The Monster and the Girl	PAR	70
Lucky Devils	UNIV	70
Where Did You Get That Girl	UNIV	70
Convoy	RKO	70
She Couldn't Say No	WAR	70
Michael Shayne, Private Detective	FOX	70
The Case of the Black Parrot	WAR	70
Lone Wolf Takes A Chance	COL	70
Barnyard Folies	REP	69
For Beauty's Sake	FOX	68
Singapore Woman	WAR	68
Horror Island	UNIV	68
A Man Betrayed	REP	68
Let's Make Music	RKO	68
Meet the Champ	UNIV	67
Hit the Road	UNIV	67
Mutiny in the Arctic	UNIV	67
Mr. Dynamite	UNIV	67
Man Made Monster	UNIV	67
Saint in Palm Springs	RKO	67
Father's Son	WAR	67
Sleepers West	FOX	67
Mr. District Attorney	REP	66
Knockout	WAR	66
Strange Alibi	WAR	66
Repent at Leisure	RKO	66
Baines Pulls the Strings	RKO	65
Melody for Three	RKO	64
Rookies on Parade	REP	64
Shadow on the Stairs	WAR	64
Scattergood Baines	RKO	64
Hello Sucker	UNIV	63
I'll Wait For You	MGM	63
Saint's Vacation	RKO	63
Girl in The News	FOX	62

D

BELOW \$100,000

Power Dive	PAR	73
Roar of the Press	MONO	69
Great Commandment	FOX	68
Bowery Boy	REP	68
Petticoat Politics	REP	68
Under Age	COL	68
I Was a Prisoner on Devil's Island	COL	67
The Great Swindle	MONO	67
Phantom of Chinatown	REP	67
Arkansas Judge	MONO	66
Sign of the Wolf	MONO	66
Chamber of Horrors	COL	65
Naval Academy	REP	64
Great Train Robbery	WAR	64
Thieves Fall Out	RKO	64
Footlight Fever	MONO	64
King of the Zombies	REP	63
Gay Vagabond	MGM	63
Land of Liberty	COL	63
Missing Ten Days	MONO	63
Pride of the Bowery	MONO	63
Voice in the Night	WAR	62
Nurse's Secret	MONO	62
Invisible Ghost	WAR	62
Shot in the Dark	MONO	62
Flying Wild	MONO	62
Her First Romance	MONO	62
You're Out of Luck	MONO	61
The Big Boss	COL	61
The Old Swimming Hole	MONO	60

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"FORCED LANDING"

Thanks!

To the two "Bills"
And to all the
members of a fine
crew.

*Richard
Arlen*